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THE BOOKMAN

JOHN FARRAR, *Editor*

THE POINT OF VIEW

HENRY HOLT

ONE of the most distinguished gentlemen of America is with us no more. The blue flag of the Yale Club hung at half mast and a few moments later a black card on the board told that the great publisher was dead. Henry Holt was a publisher of eminent scientists, philosophers, historians, poets. He was editor, counselor, business man. He never grew old. A courtly, gallant figure walking down Fifth Avenue; a stately, gracious figure in his office; a pleasant, friendly figure strolling in the woods of his Vermont estate.

Such men made publishing an art rather than a business, a gentleman's achievement rather than a profession. Their interests were wide, their accomplishments numerous. Henry Holt played the cello, and his evenings, many of them, used to be given to practising trios with a couple of music loving friends. He did much for music and for art by his appreciation and his aid. His family was unusually close to him; to see him with his sons was to realize that their feeling for him was a most unusual blend of respect and affection.

When he wrote his "Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor", it was issued from another office, lest he err in taste by publishing a book of his own. The quality of the man is admirably displayed in this humorful, gentle, readable volume. The opinions and the events recounted here are by no means always gentle. Henry Holt was a man of force and decision. In opinions he was often a man of iron; those of us who remember him as a tall, unusually handsome old man who spoke quietly and was interested in the young, must remember also that he considered a good honest fight, when necessary, as one of the duties of a gentleman.

Henry Holt was a great American. Among his friends he numbered the most celebrated men of his age. He brought their work to the public, and encouraged them in their pursuits. He was distinguished rather than spectacular; he preferred solidity to display. His roots were in America, and he was an American publisher in every sense.

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There is no finer example of living for those whose life is devoted primarily to books.

THE DIGNITY OF BEING A BORE

POULTNEY BIGELOW is said to be about to sue H. G. Wells for having called him a bore. Mr. Bigelow claims that this injury will interfere with his earning a living as an after-dinner speaker. The merits of the particular case are, naturally, not for discussion here; but it does open up a vista of entertaining speculation. How is it possible to determine who is or is not a bore? Any speaker who has a sense of his audience knows that there are times when he is undoubtedly boring the kindly listeners, and other times, more fortunate, when those before the platform laugh gleefully. The question arises: when a speaker fails to win his auditors, is *he* the bore, or are the members of the audience bores? Many a famous wit has been termed a bore by those who do not appreciate his type of witticism. Most great men and women must at one time or another have bored someone. Cleopatra, for example, must have been a terrible bore if ever she took to recounting her love affairs at length. Yet obviously she did not bore Mark Antony.

Is there not a certain dignity in being a bore? The man who is determinedly himself, who is sincere and tells always the truth, must necessarily be vastly boring to those less enlightened. It is only those persons who are most easily swayed by the ideas and the personalities of the moment, who take color from every ray of light, who twist and turn and curry popular favor — it is only they who are seldom called bores by their fellows.

Once the fear of being a bore or of being bored overcomes you, it leads to a self consciousness that pursues like a demon. Have you ever noticed that men who dread the slightest approach of boredom seldom keep a friend long? They are not willing to face the moments of plainness and pain that come from close friendship. They are often fearful of love, knowing that when a woman has ceased to be an object of passion she may easily become a boresome thing.

Undoubtedly it takes courage to be a bore; but what would happen to the world if all the sterling citizens who are considered bores by the intelligentsia were to be swept from the face of the earth? Yes, one may be called names worse than that of bore.

COLLEGE READING

THE pundits and the newspapers accuse the American college of failure to develop the extra-curriculum reading habit among students. It is claimed that our youth issue from academic halls with little or no knowledge of current literature. Since the year 1916, it seems, Princeton seniors have increased their vocabulary by a thousand words, and the New York "Times", editorializing, scoffs at the idea that wider reading is responsible for this phenomenon. Without reference to the cross word puzzle, the praise or blame is laid at the door of new inventions and discoveries, multiple heterogeneous magazines, and the ever increasing richness of our vernacular.

A visitor to the universities cannot fail, however, to come away with the impression that there is an increasingly

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active interest in the current book and author. The younger teachers of English are far more closely in touch with what is being thought and written today than are most of their elders. This fact in itself is an infallible sign of the tendency, since it is usually such instructors who are the popular leaders of ideas, for better or worse, in the college community. An observing traveler on Philadelphia trains or a sojourner in the Pennsylvania Station at vacation time will readily testify to the numbers of copies of a bright green magazine tucked under the voluminous sleeves of Princeton-bound coonskin coats. It is unthinkable that "The American Mercury" should be carried for purposes of decoration only, or that it should be read and the mind remain unstimulated toward further researches in present day ironics.

In "The Review of Reviews" Frederica Pisek, but recently graduated from Vassar College, claims that college life of the present day leads young ladies to fruitful library attendance, although she admits, "Many college girls certainly do not know as much about current fiction as the débutantes at home, who often accomplish extraordinary feats in order to be *au courant.* One girl I know left college voluntarily because she did not have time for her reading." Miss Pisek leaves to our imagination what sort of reading it was.

Why blame the colleges? If the reading habit has not been developed long before college years, will it ever really be a part of life? Are we not constantly expecting our universities to correct the mistakes of ill organized homes and preparatory schools? The love of books, like the love of music, springs from childhood associations. Crowded years of hard study may cause the pursuit of current literature to be put aside for the time, but the balanced training of the mind in various branches of learning cannot destroy — it should rather increase — the desire to own and to read books. To be sure, if our American colleges are sending out graduates who have no intellectual curiosity, it is a matter for serious and stern consideration; but is this true? Probably not. The intellectually curious cannot neglect the literature of either the past or the present. If such curiosity does not persist after college years it is the fault, is it not, of modern life, rather than of education? Is it not possible that to train a man these days to be a bookworm is to unfit him for the world?

THE FACT IS

SPEAKING of history as an exact science, there is no use in crying over spilt dates. We made up our mind long since to abandon all those fair but fragile reports about the past of mankind that made life so full of beauty and meaning while we were the blissful, if lay, reader of the little red schoolbook. In those days we firmly believed an historical truth to be anything in the way of an unconfirmed rumor that was thrilling and in all ways wonderful. Today historians proceed upon the supposition that a fact is a fact, without explaining to our entire satisfaction just what *that* may be.

We all know now that it is not permissible to hold that Columbus discovered the mainland of North America. Nor is it strictly correct to speak of Watt as the inventor of the steam engine. And has not Rupert Hughes publicly announced that Washington behaved more like a modern gentleman than a mediæval saint? He who argues that the safety pin is a

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comparatively modern improvement argues that he has failed to follow the researches of the moderns. Safety pins — called something else, no doubt, but to all intents and purposes safety pins — have been dug up at Peschiera.

One hastens to confess that these poignant reflections, so seemingly the outgrowth of a personal and intimate sorrow, are not wholly original with us, but are based upon a collection of vulgar errors recently come to hand. The compiler, who holds with Schopenhauer the pessimistic view that "to free a man from error is to give, not take away", goes on to rid his readers of some scores of other historical misapprehensions. He undertakes, as a mere starter, to shatter the last vestiges of our faith in what we fondly supposed to have been the more spectacular activities of King Canute, Lady Godiva, Horatius, and Scævola. Since "scævola" means "lefthanded" in Latin, he insists that the story is a legend, and that there never was such a person as brave young Scævola, who boldly entered the camp of Porsena and held his right hand in the fire until it was consumed, as a splendid gesture against some hateful tyranny or other, the exact nature of which escapes us at the moment.

We did not dread to learn that the Roman General Belisarius died rich, instead of poor, as commonly supposed. Belisarius never meant very much to us, either way. One is glad that he got along in the world, that is all. It seems that Khufu (Cheops for short) was a benefactor instead of an oppressor of his people. That sounds fishy, but let it pass. Our disperser of error goes far when he denies flatfootedly that Dick Whittington came to London in the company of a domestic animal called the cat. But Scævola, now! One wonders whether a fact is always a fact, and if so, whether one may be forgiven for overlooking that fact in accordance with his needs.

The primal source and ultimate goal of these musings eludes us completely. One had fully intended, until interrupted by the vulgar error man, to shed some light, now forever deflected and dispersed, upon the spring book lists in general and the historical section in particular. We have succeeded only in defending a none too tenable position. "O hateful error, melancholy's child!" sang he of Avon, and by and large we agree. Still, on another occasion the Bard observed, "This news which is called true is so like an old tale that the verity is in strong suspicion." And that might work both ways. Or it might not.

SPURIOUS CONFESSIONS OF A REVIEWER

"THE NEW REPUBLIC", in its usual attempt to be provocative at any cost, published recently an anonymous paper titled "A Reviewer's Confession". It purports to come from the pen of a person who is a professional reviewer of books. If its authorship is not spurious, then it is undoubtedly as insincere as any book review which this confessor of insincerity has ever written. Take this paragraph, for example. What a horrible example of introversion! Surely, no one so much interested in his own mental processes ever should have started off trying to understand the mental processes of others.

> The knowledge that a certain book I have not read is generally considered a masterpiece tends to warp my opinion of it and even more to paralyze the putting of that opinion down on paper. I fight against this double perversity: I secretly wish to find the acknowledged masterpiece less good than people say, and at the same time

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there invades my mind a temptation to think it better than I find it really is. Though I hate to say so, I take more pleasure in trying to blast an overrated reputation than in rescuing from obscurity an author who deserves better of the world than he has received. Yet changing fashions have their claim upon me, too. I am exceedingly vulnerable to the opinion of others, even when I have learned to discount their judgment. Personalities fascinate me. I love to talk, and to hear talk, about authors, their quarrels, royalties, divorces and the town in which they have chosen to revise the proofs of their next book. I know a good many of them, and something about most of them, and I have yet to find a single instance in which the acquaintanceship or the gossip has failed to influence me, for good or evil, when it came to reviewing one of their books.

The worst of it is that this amazingly weak kneed article represents what many people undoubtedly think the minds of book reviewers are. A suspicion arises that the article is intended as a satirical impression of what outsiders believe book reviewers to be. Surely this close is not serious:

I shall go on reviewing, though I suspect I am not fitted for it, because I know I am more fitted for it than most of the other reviewers, and because the rewards are the kind of rewards I like. Not financial, though money does count a good deal. The sweetest reward is to be flattered, even when the flattery is silly, to be complimented on that "lovely" or "significant" review even when I thought poorly of it myself. I shall go on trying vainly to make my external words square with that internal feeling about a book which forever defies words. I shall go on saying what my opinion is even when I haven't any, because any fool can have an opinion and I am no fool. I shall go on struggling against the shadows cast across my own opinion by the opinion of others. I shall go on suffering attacks of conscience after the review is printed. I shall go on spinning out of mental chaos and irresolution nuggets of clarity and certitude.

I don't know very much about Literature but — no, I don't even know what I like.

The ideal book reviewer, in our opinion, is the man who, with a fair background of reading and learning, has a limitless zest for life and picks up each new book as an adventure.

PATRIOTIC KANSAS CITY

THE Metropolitan Opera House swings its doors wide to a new American singer. We are pardonably elated. She is Marion Talley of Kansas City, and brisk natives of her town charter cars for a grandiose special excursion and buy up all available tickets to furnish a claque at her première. The president of the local Rotary Club probably comes to scrutinize Miss Talley's trills, and to further the cause of Kansas City.

Here is foreshadowed a new hope for art, literature, and music in America. As an adjunct to the Board of Trade they can be made to pay. Business men of other states would do well to train rival singers, and to engineer similar ballyhoos; it would not do for Missouri to become recognized as our only musical nursery.

Arkansas should rear a poet to recount its charms and he should be brought on a float to City Hall Park. "Better Art — Better Business" may become a practical slogan. The State of Florida decides that its commercial side is becoming too prominent. It seeks advice. "You need", says the wise publicity man, "a school of poets."

Massachusetts recovered almost entirely from its reputation for literary highbrowism at the time of the police strike. Irish revolt and Brahmins do not harmonize in the public mind. New Jersey might do much toward banishing the mosquito by developing a famous butterfly. But to have their fullest effect all such phenomena must be properly celebrated. Marion Talley is a young lady of whom America and Kansas City may well be proud, but she is far more than that; for in the manner of her advent she is the symbol of a growing national disease — that of over publicizing.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF STEPHEN CRANE

By Mrs. Joseph Conrad

MY first meeting with Stephen Crane came one evening early in November, 1897, a little more than seven weeks before our eldest boy, Borys, was born. My husband, who had met him perhaps twice, had in a way prepared me for someone at once unusual and with a charm peculiarly his own. He must have been then about six and twenty, and appeared to my maternal mind very slight and delicate. He and Joseph Conrad were on the easy terms of complete understanding, I saw at once; his manner to me was slightly nervous and not a little shy. I don't remember much of the evening that followed after that dinner — I left them together and did not see him before he left early the next morning. The most lasting impression I have is of our taking our coffee, when Stephen, balancing himself on his tilted chair, discoursed gravely on the merits of his three dogs, Sponge, Flannel, and Ruby. The former two had the distinction later of being the parents of the dog he insisted on presenting to the baby. I believe this puppy was known as Soap until he became a member of our household, when Conrad christened him Escamillo, Millo for short.

When the boy was two days old I was deeply moved to receive from Stephen's wife Cora a beautiful box of flowers and a warm invitation to spend a week with them in their home Ravensbrook as soon as the baby was old enough to travel. This visit we made when Borys was exactly five weeks old. The royal preparations for the small person's arrival touched me very much — since we came without a nurse, a huge easy chair was placed by the side of mine at the table for him to lie in. Stephen had brought with him from Greece two brothers, one of whom he retained in his own household as butler. This youth was most assiduous in his attentions on the young gentleman, and would creep into my room when I was bathing the baby if I forgot to lock my door against him. His English amused us not a little on more than one occasion. One day he was sent by Stephen with a message for my husband and this is the form in which he delivered it: "Mr. Conrad, Mr. Stokes, he come, he want you Mr. Crane." I fear that, owing to my inexperience, the baby must have disturbed the peace of the household not a little; his food decidedly disagreed with him and he voiced much of his dissatisfaction in the night, a habit most infants have. However, we spent a very pleasant week and left with a warm invitation to repeat the visit someday soon. Stephen declared he had some distinct claim to our precious baby. Cora too was very much taken up with the child, but in a different way.

Our next meeting with Cora, then staying alone while Stephen was in Cuba, was marred by her very real anxiety as to his whereabouts, and a fierce jealousy as to his possible fancy for someone he might meet. In vain I assured her of my complete conviction that Stephen was deeply attached to her, and that his first

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thought as soon as he was able to get a letter through would be of her.

A few weeks afterward he returned, a changed man. Exposure and his experiences in Cuba had set their mark on a constitution never very good, and we looked apprehensively at each other. It was about this time that we saw the most of Stephen. His chief delight was to lie on the grass smoking and watching the small boy's efforts to move along alone. I often caught a wonderful gleam in his eyes as he watched so intently his little friend. He and the boy's father made plans far ahead when it should be time to put the child on horseback. "I shall teach your boy to ride, Joseph," he would say, "and he must have a dog, a boy ought to have a dog."

We stayed for more than a fortnight on our first visit to Brede Place, which had been lent him by some friends. Here it was that Stephen would sit in the window of the big drawing room, twanging a guitar and singing in a low voice some haunting Neapolitan air, his wonderful eyes fixed on space. He never varied his tune but I always noticed an expression of serenity and quiet satisfaction on his face at these times.

Few words written by my husband of other men could give me more acute pleasure than his foreword to Mr. Beer's book on Stephen Crane. I fancy also that few people remain now who could have known him as well as we did. The admiration each artist had for the other, and that something akin in each personality, made their friendship a thing apart. I have heard it said that Stephen had done his best work; perhaps so, but it is difficult to judge. His last two or three years were shadowed by ill health. He who had always been an active man, a wonderful horseman, an intrepid adventurer, must have felt any restraint acutely.

One vivid recollection I have of both Stephen and Cora. I had been talking to her while she made her preparations to retire, and after I had kissed her good night I withdrew toward the door at the far end of the room and looked back. She had chosen for her bedroom the ballroom, and her big four post bedstead standing on the raised dais (where the musicians were meant to sit) looked like a tiny doll's bed. All the necessary bedroom furniture was grouped close together in a small island and the light from the two tall candles threw the rest of the vast apartment into ghostly shadow. At the extreme end of the big room appeared a small opening like a tube railway; far in the distance I saw Stephen and my husband seated in close conclave. From where I stood their animated faces seemed to hang in the air, independent of their bodies. From that tiny room there was no exit except through Cora's bedroom. I remember thinking that when Stephen escorted his friend through as they parted for the night, Cora would be sleeping too far away to be visible, even with the light of the candles burning close beside her. Hardly a comfortable room to have chosen for sleeping, especially in winter. There were plenty of more manageable bedrooms which could have been made extremely cosy. Numbers of the rooms were empty, no servant then would ever consent to sleep the night in Brede Place which was supposed to be haunted. The long array of really slatternly girls and women who appeared in the morning and faded away at sunset must have been depressing in the extreme to a man as highly strung and sensitive as Stephen. It was this peculiarity on the part of Cora

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that gave rise to much unfavorable gossip. This and her strange fancy for inviting people in such shoals to visit the house that even Brede Place could not accommodate them each with a bedroom. Cora therefore made the vast rooms into dormitories, and all day long a wagonette, drawn by two horses, plied between Brede Place and Rye Station for the convenience of those friends and acquaintances who might desire to call on the Cranes. I fancy Cora's idea was that this lavish hospitality would bring to Stephen much popularity; and all the while he wrote, feverishly anxious, too anxious to get the best out of himself. There were days when he would appear unexpectedly driving his two horses, Glenroy and Gloster, down the steep hill road above the old farmhouse where we lived. Stephen, Cora, and a friend — seldom more, and always unexpected. Those visits were at all times a delight, and Stephen and my husband seemed to get much mutual benefit from the close interchange of ideas.

Our small boy had now attained the age of fifteen months or so, and our next visit to Brede Place was marked by the fact that Borys took his first two or three steps all alone, down the steep bank outside the study window, in full view of his admiring friend and his proud father. The child became a regular rival to those dogs to whom Stephen had become so devoted. Time after time I have seen him raise the thin face bent low over his work and, without the least impatience, open the door for one of those spoiled animals to pass through. Then when he had almost returned to his seat he would have to repeat the performance. Sometimes, when he was too ill and languid to attend to their demands himself, he would request the old servitor (an elderly manservant who had been lent with the house) to do so. Many times I watched the solemn farce, sorely tempted to interfere. The old ruffian, his face set in the most benevolent expression, would escort the dogs to the head of the stone steps and then solemnly kick each one down the steep flight.

Those dogs were the source of much tribulation in the village and were also very destructive to the sheep and lambs in the surrounding park. It happened unfortunately that Stephen either could or would not consent to pay for the damage, and the shepherd more than once threatened dire consequences. All this Stephen disregarded in a somewhat lofty manner. Then one day when we were returning from a long drive (we had been absent two days) we all gasped and held our noses as soon as the horses turned into the drive. A sheep's carcass hung from each of the four or five biggest trees bordering the drive in the park. Stephen's face turned deathly pale with anger while he muttered curses under his breath. The horses shied violently at the ghastly objects swinging on a level with their heads. Next morning when I went out the carcasses had all disappeared, and I never heard that Stephen did more than roundly curse the shepherd.

It was something like eighteen months later, and some few months since we had heard from him. We had, indeed, no idea that he was much worse; but one night I woke my husband to tell him of a very vivid dream I had had. I saw the man for whom we had so great an affection being conveyed to some seaport town a long distance from Brede Place. I distinctly saw the invalid carriage, which I recognized as an ambulance being driven at a gentle pace along

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the road. I seemed to be present at the inn where the horses were changed, and my impression was so strong that I had to speak of it at once. By the next morning's post came a letter from Cora requesting us to go at once to Dover, as Stephen wished to see us once again before he completed his journey to the Black Forest.

We went early in the day, taking the small boy Borys with us. Conrad told me afterward how he had sat talking to the sick man, who was able to answer only by signs and by a few panting words scarcely above a whisper. That parting glimpse of Stephen lying on the bed with his wonderful eyes fixed on the ships that showed through his open window, the feeble voice, and the stretcher on which he was to make this final journey, made a deep and lasting impression on my husband's mind. I recall his words when he rejoined me in the hotel, where I sat endeavoring to comfort poor Cora. We took a sorrowful farewell of her and anxiously requested a wire to let us know which day they were to leave. The weather was too rough for them to cross for nearly a week, and even then they had to spend two days on the way because of his increased weakness. My husband's words ring in my mind now: "It is the end, Jess. He knows it is all useless. He goes only to please Cora, and he would rather have died at home!"

CHRYSANTHEMUM NELLY

By Virginia Moore

BY day, Chrysanth'mum Nelly baked black bread
For blacker pickaninnies, thick as bees
That blunder in and out magnolia trees;
She weeded cantaloups and ravaged red
Potato bugs, and wondered which were dead —
The garden or herself. She braced her knees
To keep the cursed cabin, at a sneeze,
From falling spitefully about her head.

Nevertheless, at dusk, her world went white:
With honeysuckle hoops hung in her ears
And tree toads beating tomtoms to the night,
Her body leaped out like a flash of spears;
A moon butting the branches was a blind
Ancestral slice of amber melon rind. . . .

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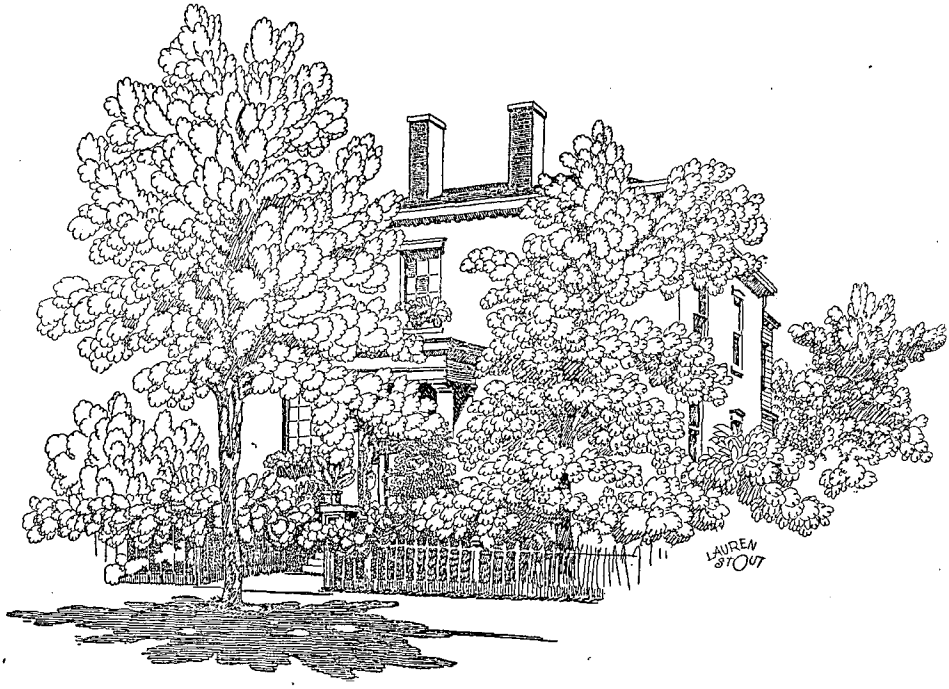

Lauren Stout is a New Yorker. Recently Doubleday, Page and Company sent him to the south to make a series of sketches for pamphlets they are issuing on various of their authors. He has made several pictures of the country in which Ellen Glasgow's "Barren Ground" is set, and on his trip to Richmond took the opportunity to make a sketch of the lovely old house where this famous southern novelist lives and writes.

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Not far away, at Dumbarton Grange, Mr. Stout found James Branch Cabell. The studio which he limned is the one in which Mr. Cabell has written many of his novels; where he finished, in fact, "The Silver Stallion", to be published during the spring season.

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CRITIC AND NOVELIST

By Hugh Walpole

Enter Troilus as critic and Ulysses as novelist.

ULYSSES. Good evening, Troilus, have some tea?

Troilus. No, thanks. Do you know that you're beginning this conversation exactly like the dialogue between Gosse and George Moore in "Avowals"?

U. Well, what does it matter? Because Gosse and Moore once had a conversation, it doesn't mean that we're never to have one.

T. Not at all, and, as a matter of fact, we have had half ours already. This, I take it, is to be a continuation of last night's.

U. Yes, or rather this morning's. When you declared about four o'clock this morning that all novelists were money grubbers and that their pose of being artists was in nine cases out of ten a cloak to cover their money grubbing, I at once asked you to tea.

T. At least, then, you thought that what I said was of importance. You novelists are such lofty fellows and look down upon us critics as men who are doing the work we are simply because we haven't got the talents to do something more lucrative. You think we are all jaundiced, disappointed, envenomed. Every novelist has always thought that about every critic since novels began.

U. That's so false that it's not worth contradicting. It wasn't really about criticism mainly that I wanted to talk. You said last night or this morning that you really *would* like to know what a novelist's condition is inside. That is, what a novelist with more or less of a public, making more or less of an income, and living half his life in a fictitious world that nobody but himself believes in, feels; whether that kind of man ever wakes up and says to himself: "Well, what the dickens am I doing with all this stuff and nonsense? Am I really going on for another twenty or thirty years turning out these impossible stories about impossible people? Don't I feel that I'm cheating both the world and myself? Don't I sometimes grasp the difference between *my* books and the real books, and when I do, doesn't it for a moment at any rate make me feel sick with shame?"

T. Oh, come now, I don't think your books as bad as all that. There was an early one of yours — I forget its name for the moment — which didn't seem to me half bad, and if you had gone on in that line —

U. [*interrupting*]. Oh, yes, I know, but this afternoon we're going to be perfectly frank. I think you a cold blooded, weary, satiated critic who has read so many books at such a Niagara pace that it's impossible for you to get a new thrill over anything whatever except, it may be, something very gloomy, foreign, and technical, and you look on me as a popular novelist with a crowd of silly people who don't know good books from bad waiting to feed me, and my existence is only one more proof to you of the rotten way in which this clumsy world is run.

T. I don't care for your books, I'll confess. They seem to me written without any real artistic impulse, to be much too facile, to be wordy and dis-

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tended, but you're not as bad as some people and you do care for what you're doing; you have an enthusiasm about it. I simply don't think that you've got any æsthetic perception. That's not your fault. If your popularity hadn't come to you so soon you might have done better work. You may do some good work yet, and then I'll be glad to recant all I've ever said.

U. That's very sweet of you, but what I want really to talk about this afternoon is that question as to what a novelist, when he has an audience, really feels about his work and his position and the critics. I suppose that you'll agree with me that there are three types of novelists in England just at this moment. There are the sheer æsthetes, headed by George Moore, who publishes his books in lovely limited editions, who writes like an angel, who trails his personality around the drawing room, a red cloak flicking where no bull is, and after him a stream of people, most of them very young, who write stories in dots and dashes, little episodes after Tchekhov, down to boys with rosy cheeks who give us hectic descriptions of Oxford.

Then there are the second class who puzzle you critics most desperately. This class consists of writers who have large publics, who are popular, and yet who do deserve serious criticism. Galsworthy, Bennett, Wells, May Sinclair, are the leaders for the moment, and Swinnerton and others are coming on behind them. There's not one name in this division whose merits are not fiercely debated. "The Old Wives' Tale" and "Tono Bungay" and Galsworthy's "Forsyte" novels seem to me good enough for any generation, but you haven't got to go five yards in London without coming upon some young pup of a critic or some old grey bearded Jacques who will tell you that Wells is no artist, that Bennett is entirely mercenary, and that Galsworthy is an old woman.

Then, of course, there's the third division; the popular novelists who are disregarded altogether by the critics, whose novels when they appear are given only a line or two in the press yet go gaily round and round the circulating libraries until the covers are worn off their backs and their pages are thick with grease and finger marks.

T. This is all very interesting. What's the point?

U. The point is just this. Let me put it personally. I've been publishing novels for fifteen years. I've got a public both here and in America; I make what is called "a regular income". When I publish a book the papers give it a considerable amount of notice. One critic says this, and another critic says that. I get letters from people I don't know, and from people I do. Sometimes I'm pleased, sometimes I'm angry, sometimes I'm amused. What's my relation to the book that I've produced? Do the critics help me? Am I conceited and swollen headed? Do I yield to temptation and write something simply because I have to make money by it? Is that a wrong thing to do? Do I tkae myself, and do most novelists take themselves, too seriously? What does it feel like to live in that imaginary world, which after all must be real to some extent to yourself, even though it isn't real to anybody else?

T. Yes, those questions would be interesting if you could give a really honest answer to them, but no novelist can. He has to pose.

U. Well, what do you think the novelist's pose is?

T. Oh, it's obvious enough. Don't you see interviews a dozen times a year in which the eminent novelist, seated in

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his study, declares, with his hands on his heart, that he knows his novels aren't anything very great, but that he does his best, that he can't help himself, that his creations bother him, that he has to let them out. Then he mentions certain novelists by name whose work he likes. He mentions them in order to emphasize the names that he doesn't mention. "There's no such thing as jealousy in the literary world", he says. "Everybody is, of course, delighted when a good book succeeds." And what a pity it is that a good book should succeed so seldom, and that it is the success of the bad work that causes an honest novelist such terrible pangs. He never thinks of money. If it comes, of course he's glad. If it doesn't come he hopes that he can live in a garret as well as another, and he concludes with one or two references to Balzac and Flaubert and some of the Russians, offers the interviewer tea, and sees him out of the front door. That's what I call a popular novelist's pose.

U. There isn't probably as much pose about that as you imagine. Have you ever written a novel, Troilus?

T. No, thank God! There are enough novels in the world already without —

U. Yes, exactly. I know all that. But if you haven't written a novel, you can have no idea of the kind of hold it takes upon you so long as it's with you. I'm not talking now about genius. We're leaving that out of this discussion. What Tolstoy and Flaubert and Conrad —

T. [*interrupting*]. There, didn't I say that you'd bring those names in before you'd finish?

U. Well, let me bring them in. What those men have felt when they've been writing their novels I don't know, but I suspect that their sensations have differed very slightly from what the feeblest novelist of today feels when he is writing his. You're in contact with something that is as real to you as your own daily life, probably much more real. You hear people talking, you watch scenes moving across your vision that engross you by their drama and beauty, and it isn't your fault that you are not up to the recording of them magnificently. The picture that Mr. Smith sees of a middle aged married woman falling in love with a young man much handsomer and more attractive than her very dull husband is precisely the same picture that Tolstoy sees when he is watching Anna and Vronsky. It isn't Mr. Smith's fault that he hasn't the divine interpretation. He does his best with his vision, and so long as it lasts he is cheated by the splendor of it. It's only when the book is concluded and the vision has slipped away that he sees for the first time the miserable record of it that is all that is left. We are not considering, mind you, that third division of deliberate money makers — the gentlemen who shout three stories down the phonograph at once; the lady who dictates for her very life in order to get the next "Daily Flash" instalment of her serial off in time — but if you were to know about them truly, I think you would be surprised at the reality of their picture to themselves and their deep belief in it.

T. Yes, that's all very well. I've noticed the most tiresome old men at the club telling their stories to reluctant listeners, thrilled by their own narration. That does not mean that they are not bores of the first order, and it has nothing to do with art.

U. I'm coming to art in a minute. Granted that the novelist is absorbed by his story, has some personal intimacy with his characters, does spend hours of every day in company with people who are real to him, more hours

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perhaps than he spends with his wife or his children, you'll agree that the novelist has something to consider besides art. He is not only seeing visions as the poet sees them, not only tracking down ideas as the philosopher tracks them, not only developing a splendid prose as the essayist develops it; he is dealing with people, human beings, flesh and blood to himself at any rate.

T. Oh, I grant you his self deception.

U. Well then, the book is finished. The characters have slipped back into shadow, but he must retain for them some feeling of warmth and friendship. When his book comes out, he has the feeling that he is pushing some of his children into the world, and he scarcely realizes how personal they are to him until he watches their contact with the public. I give it you as my settled conviction that nine out of ten novelists do not consider their public until the book is finished. They have been genuine at least to that extent.

T. I'll grant that to some of them at any rate.

U. That's very kind and gracious of you. If you grant that, you will understand that the actual publication, the moment of publication, must be pretty serious, however contemptible the work is. I don't say that one doesn't get over it, recover in a week or two perhaps, but for that week or two the father of that work is sensitive, raw, hurt by anybody, pleased by anybody, altogether in a most touching condition.

T. Yes, a very affecting picture, but you mustn't expect critics to be tender to bad work because the author is feeling sensitive. A critic has no business with anything except the work itself.

U. Ah, now you have got your finger on the root of the matter. If only that were really so! I don't mean for a moment that I think the critics are wilfully malicious or deliberately unfair. In my fifteen years' experience, after hundreds and hundreds of criticisms, I can say with absolute honesty that I have never had one deliberately malicious and below the belt. No, I don't mean that at all. What I mean is that the critic becomes, as the years pass, sick and tired of the very thing about which it is most important that he should be fresh and eager. Moreover, he goes on from year to year trying to estimate fairly work that has a grain running through it that is hostile to all his notions of life.

T. I deny that critics are always tired of the thing they are criticizing. They see it more cold bloodedly than the author of it sees it, naturally.

U. How can they help but be tired? For four years I once reviewed all the fiction on a certain paper. When I have eaten too much crab for supper that period is still a terrible nightmare to me. Those streams of novels flowing into my room, myself at the other end, bundling them out again through the other door, and always more coming, and more, and more, and more. . . . Even though I considered only the best two or three of the week, that meant nearly two hundred new novels in the year. How could I not be sick to death of them long before the end came?

T. I don't know. There are plenty of old ladies who read a novel a day all the year round and thrive on it.

U. Thanks so much for the comparison. I am not saying I was a good critic, but I was exercising my critical faculties. I was thinking about those books and trying to get something out of them. There were certain authors whom I disliked, whatever they wrote. I was most honestly determined not to be prejudiced, but the way they looked, the things I heard of them, their

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popularity, their philosophy of life, their tricks of style — these things, I can see now, kept me away from an honest view of their work. I ought to have said from the beginning, "No, I won't touch this man's books, I can't see them straight."

T. You probably saw them straight enough. If you disliked them, they were bad for you, and you had every right to say so.

U. No, it wasn't *them* that I disliked. It was the Something in me that couldn't fit in with the Something in them. Let's be personal again for a moment. The view of life that I have is optimistic. I believe, quite naively if you like, that there is a purpose in life, that human beings are on the whole much finer than you might expect them to be, and so on. You believe that life is a horrible mess, one long tragedy. You will grant human beings their pathos perhaps, but nothing more. How can any page that I shall ever write do anything but irritate you? It seems to you that I am giving people a kind of quack medicine and making money by it. Well then, all I say is that you should not review my work without saying first how deeply opposed our views of life are. I don't know that you ever have reviewed a book of mine, but if you did, would you make such an admission? Not for a moment. You would be godlike, Olympian, looking down on this poor little earth and condescendingly observing me, a worm of a scribbler.

T. There is something in what you say. There always has been something. Novelists can't expect to get the ideal critic for their work. If you have me on one side, you have Mr. B. on the other, who thinks your philosophy the finest ever known, and your art superb. What I take away with one hand he gives with another.

U. Yes, but don't you know that there's a curious handicap under which artists suffer? I myself, for instance, view with suspicion the praise I get, think my supporter must be suddenly rather weak headed, whereas my detractor suddenly seems a tremendous fellow, even though he doesn't know about what he is talking. But let's leave that for a moment. It brings me to my real point, which is this — that after one's book has had the dust and confusion of its public appearance all about it for some weeks, the author suddenly ceases to care, there's something new going on in his head, he is filled with new dreams. This time he is really going to bring it off. Both the praise and blame for the earlier work mean less and less to him, and it won't be until long afterward, when the clamor has all died down, that he returns to the work, picks it up and looks at it, has a kindly and friendly feeling for it, and likes sometimes to find that it is not altogether forgotten and still has a little life of its own.

T. I must protest that you are falling into that very pose of which I spoke at the beginning of our conversation. It's a very beautiful picture, this, of the novelist intent only on his creation, thinking only of his beautiful work, and letting everything else go hang, but it simply isn't true. What of all the business, the serial rights, the cinema rights, checks from your literary agent, lecturing, the going out to dinner parties, the speeches at ladies' clubs? You're not going to tell me that you never think of those things, and that you would be quite as happy if you got none of them.

U. Of course not. Of course one likes to be liked, and one's work to be liked. One likes to meet people who are glad to see one. One likes to be able to take a taxi without wondering

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where the next meal will come from. One likes even to be selfishly generous sometimes. I won't deny all that. But these things occur after the book is out and done with; and, without any pose at all, one's real life is everything that comes *before* the book is finished. The gambling sense that perhaps this time you are going to win, that this time you have assuredly backed the right horse.

T. Yes, and this funny, curious longing for immortality which some of you people have. I don't mean real immortality. Conceited though you novelists are, you can't most of you hope for that. One novelist after another seems pathetically to long for the assurance that he will be read a little while after he's dead, as though it mattered to him or to anyone else twopence, and as though most novels aren't stone dead six months after they are published.

U. I don't think it's a longing for immortality. I suppose most men have a kind of wistful hope that after they are gone, one day, in some house or another, someone will pick up a book of theirs and look at it and wonder who they were and what they were like. That's natural enough, that desire for a continuance of themselves. People feel exactly the same about their children, and as to books' lasting, it's strangely difficult to kill a book. At least, you never can be sure which is the book that's going to be killed. Old Trollope in his Autobiography says, again and again, that he expects that nobody in the next generation will read a word that he has ever written, and here he is in 1926, more alive than he was at any rate in the second half of his day. That hope does no one any harm.

T. Well, at any rate you've been frank. There is something in being creative, even though it's a very thin kind of creation, and I grant you that we critics are apt to make this mistake — that we try too often to drive men into the shapes that we would have them be, don't allow them enough to work out their own pattern in the carpet. All the same, there are far too many bad novelists, and not enough good ones. It's a dreary business nowadays being a critic.

U. You get your picture of us, of the men whom you think popular, you see us bloated and arrogant and plutocratic. Nine out of ten of us know how desperately we miss what we try for. We can't help ourselves. We're as good as we can be. Geniuses aren't like blackberries — our consolation is not in the things that the world gives us, but in living our own little imaginative life, tracing out the mountains and the rivers, the cities and the villages, following the figures that we see as closely as we can.

T. I must get along now. Next time a book of yours comes out, I'll read it and try and think of what you've told me, but I know that I shan't — I shall only see the bad grammar, and the false philosophy, and the muddled psychology. If I don't find these things, I'll write and tell you so.

U. Thanks so much, but it doesn't matter whether you find them or not. I'm not writing for you. I'm not writing for myself. I'm not writing for anybody at all. I'm only trying to catch something that will always escape me, and that's not a bad occupation for any man's life.

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HOW BIG IS DREISER?

By Charles R. Walker

THERE have been so many dragons charging and snorting flame about the person and books of Theodore Dreiser for twenty odd years, that it has been a matter of skill to catch a glimpse of the artist above the smoke and blood of his controversialists. The last few years have seen a change, however, in the critical atmosphere. No one is yelling, "The blond beast!" any more or very loudly. And the cry of "Immoralist!" has sunk to a whisper. It is possible, at last, to pick one's way among the heaped cadavers of dead dragons, and find out how big the man is, standing there in his stocking feet. Of what stature and proportions?

Ten years ago when Dreiser's last novel, "The Genius", appeared, Comstockians and professors stood together ready to jump with a snarl at his throat. And did. Now comes "An American Tragedy" moving from the presses to the American home and newspaper offices in a critical atmosphere of expectant but comparative calm. Surely no author alive has encountered more dragons and hobgoblins and moral poison gas on his way from obscurity to comparative acceptance.

The story of Dreiser's own conflict with society (the theme of all his novels) is one of the most heroic in literary history. Dreiser collectors of today are very happy when they can call their own a copy out of that first throttled edition of "Sister Carrie". The outlines of this literary siege and battle are worth recalling. In 1900 Frank Norris, then a publisher's reader, persuaded his editorial associates — against their better judgment — to publish "Sister Carrie". After the contract was signed and before the novel was printed, a woman adviser read the manuscript and persuaded the firm to abandon its publication, on grounds of gross immorality. Dreiser, however, stuck to the letter of the contract and demanded publication. The publishers at length compromised; they printed a few copies and mailed them to reviewers, resolving to wait upon the verdict of the critics. When that verdict rolled in, it was unprecedented in its venom and fervor. The young author (then twenty nine) was called a falsifier of life, a calumniator of American womanhood, the Devil's advocate!

From this beginning the legend grew strong and ubiquitous of Dreiser, corrupter of youth and morals, Nietzschean, and immoralist. "Jennie Gerhardt", "The Financier", "The Titan", were all thrown under the same moral ban, though none of them was suppressed. When "The Genius" appeared in 1915, the Comstockians and the Anti-Vice Society appointed a committee to investigate, and statistics were carefully dredged up out of the seven hundred pages of the novel under the two heads of immorality and profanity. Mencken, who reviews the Vice Report with gargantuan guffaws in his essay on Dreiser, points out that the search for profanity was not carried through with the same zest as the sniffing hunt for sexual suggestion. He lists with satisfaction several "God-

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dams", "Oh Hells", and "My Lords" which the Comstockians overlooked!

This sort of infantile nonsense, while it did not prevent a number of the clear sighted from recognizing the solid merits of the man, threw up a smoke screen that got into the eyes of the more casual and astigmatic reader. In England, where none of these tricks went on, Dreiser was recognized some ten or fifteen years earlier than in America.

At about this time, the professors and the guardians of culture as well as of morality joined in the chase. Stuart P. Sherman and Percy H. Boynton and others wrote essays condemning Dreiser. He was found, not only to be immoral, but to function through a style that was flat, stale, and unliterary. It did all the things it ought not to do and none of the things it ought. There was no health in it. Worse, according to Professor Sherman, he was a propagandist for a "jungle philosophy". He evaded the task of representing character, Professor Sherman complained, in favor of coloring life to suit his preconceived philosophy that all men are brutes and society a jungle.

In recent years, owing in part to the vigorous and mercilessly footnoted and documented championship of Mencken, Rascoe, and others, and to the fact that many of the critical professors have taken to reading the novels themselves to see what is in them, there has been a new appraisal and a better understanding. On the other hand, a class of partizans who saw in Dreiser the only "realist" and truth teller of American life, and who till now threw in their confusing and unhelpful volume of noise, have quieted a little. It is a good time to look up at the man again and to get his true measure.

The first thing that strikes an incipient reader taking into his hand one of the tomes of the Dreiser canon, is its bulk. His first novel covers five hundred and fifty printed pages. That is a short book for him, but it must be remembered that his friend, Arthur T. Henry, cut out forty thousand words before it went to the publishers. The average for the others is between six and seven hundred closely printed pages, a quarter of a million words! "An American Tragedy", the latest, contains eight hundred and forty pages in close print, and appears in two volumes. And such words as he has put into this sea of print! No one among the hostile critics has thought out a sufficiently damning injunction against Dreiser's style. Mencken, his best defender, is, I think, the most eloquent on its essential badness. For it *is* bad, elaborately, unbelievably. It is a great grey sea of flat phrases, clichés, grammatical errors, and broken backed sentences. Between sketches of character and events faultless in their psychology and dramatic perfection, are pages and pages of barren incident "flat as dish water", as Mencken puts it. Of course the years of newspaper work are a key to the Dreiser style. They account for its conscientious piling of fact upon fact, name upon name, and for its ubiquitous journalese. But, as Mencken says, no newspaper would print sentences as bad as those in "The Genius"! Still, when the worst epithets that can be conjured are fitted to the literary bad manners of Dreiser, the fact remains that he succeeds. He succeeds with all his abominable phraseology in building up the most moving tragedies ever written out of American life. Beneath the leaden words, the staggering chapters, the characters move and grow and take hold of our nerves and hearts. Alas! that he lacks that amalgam of gifts which enables the genius to add to structure and detail

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the flowing line which sings itself everlastingly into the mind.

In "An American Tragedy", I seem to detect a smoothing of awkward places, a growing fluency, even euphony, of line. But I won't believe till I read his next four books that it is a permanent amelioration. After the comparative serenity of "Jennie Gerhardt" came the fabulous morasses of "The Genius". Still, "An American Tragedy" is wrought in closer mesh, I think, than the others. The incidents given are nearly all rich and fully rounded. There isn't that baggage of skeleton events, names, and discussions that clutters "The Financier" and "The Genius".

Theodore Dreiser is an individualist, a lover of the variety of life, its color, strength, passion, its material goods. He is also intensely troubled by its injustices, its pathetic instances of cruelty to the weak, ignorant, and unprotected. Life appears to him ugly, cruel, and meaningless. It also appears to him as mystical, radiant, and fascinating. He is forever troubled, delighted, and a little amazed, like a child seeing things for the first time. For conventions, for current moralities, for arbitrary statements of right and wrong, he hasn't much use.

He sums it all up: "Life seems to prove but one thing to me and that is that the various statements concerning right, truth, justice, wrong, are palaver merely, an earnest and necessitous attempt perhaps, at balance and equation where all things are so very much unbalanced, paradoxical and contradictory — the small-change names for a thing or things of which we have not yet caught the meaning."

How does this life attitude modify his novels? Does it pervert them? Does it make them immoral? Does it warp them into propaganda as the hostile critics charge? And if not, what does it do? Without question, in the first place it operates to determine his choice of theme. Dreiser has written six novels and each of them deals with a fight — to the death usually — between the individual and society. From "Sister Carrie", the life story of a girl who became the mistress of two men, to "An American Tragedy", which draws the net of a young man's desires so tight that murder seems the only escape, the conflict goes on between man's heart and the organized hindrances of society.

In this singular devotion to one theme and its variants through a life span of novel writing, is Theodore Dreiser a propagandist, as his critics have said, for the "jungle philosophy"? Pluck the chords of his main situations and listen; they will resound in key. The characters chosen are the characters that would act that way in the situations into which he plunges them. A philosophy of mystic individualism is deducible from his books, to be sure. That isn't the point. So can Christianity be distilled from Tolstoy. Whatever Dreiser thinks, whatever lyrics he may intersperse on the "chemic urge", his characters behave like Americans in Chicago and Kansas City and Lycurgus, New York. He is, in a word, an artist sensitive to people and, beyond most, to the underlying forces of his age — to the *Weltgeist*. The characters he decides to dip in the creative bath of his sympathy, he chooses according to his nature and his powers, as what artist does not? He writes about money making, the love and romance of material wealth, because they are perhaps the most typical and persistent forces in America. Not the lure of money either, but the romantic, adventurous, mystic lure of that luxury, power and adventure which lies behind money in

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America. Dreiser writes of it because he is essentially, instinctively, inescapably American. Of love and its conflict with the peculiar environment of Anglo-Saxon, middle western, puritan America, he writes because that, too, is essentially American, and he has had large experience of the contest.

Here are the soundest personal and artistic reasons for choosing the themes he has chosen. Considering America, and considering himself, he has done well.

Nevertheless this devotion to the bout between man and society, with money and sex in the heavy rôles, makes plain not only his range but his limitations. Somewhere in this choice and treatment is an instrument of personal and artistic measure. It isn't solely that he chooses the man-versus-society complex, but that in painting the canvas he leaves out a whole range of situations, and a whole type and genre of character. It never occurs to him apparently that a person feeling more deeply and subtly the obligations of a convention would be the more interesting and tragic a character when he broke it.

Could he ever have taken Conrad's Lord Jim and believed in him at all! Yet there are Lord Jims even in the American scene. Could he have made a protagonist out of Gabriel Oak, the hero of Hardy's "Far From the Madding Crowd", a balanced, good humored person, concealing a slow, burning, passionate purpose at the seat of his being! One wonders if Dreiser has noticed any of his kind about. In all likelihood, yes, but there was nothing in such men to give the torch to his imagination. He could have done the heroine in that book well enough. And her episode with Sergeant Troy would take on a glory and passion Hardy failed to give it. Dr. Gottlieb in Lewis's "Arrowsmith" is the sort of type one never meets in any but a supernumerary rôle in the whole canon of Dreiser's novels.

No artist can be measured by his ability to create the characters of another — I don't advance any such absurdity — but these examples are perhaps suggestive of the general truth, which any reader of Dreiser's novels may deduce for himself: that persons or situations or epochs in which discipline and tradition are living and significant forces — not simply second hand shackles — are beyond his range. It should be added, that characters in whom intellectual or religious passion is dominant are beyond his scope or his interest. This, I submit, is the evidence of the six novels. Yet he is a hardy critic who would eke dogmas for the future out of Dreiser's work. The novelist is very much alive in him still and he may turn himself inside out before his literary time is past. When he wrote "Twelve Men" only a few years ago he went far to give the lie to what I have said and set a dozen critics by the ears. Yet in general the foregoing analysis stands, I'll warrant, as the strength and weakness of his powers. In sum, neither his critics nor his partizans have been right. He is not a person who, in the phrase of Professor Sherman, "colors the news" and twists life to suit his philosophy any more, say, than Hardy or Tolstoy colors and twists it. Nor, as his hoarse defenders shout, is he the only novelist who tells the truth about American life. He is a conscientious artist, merely, who according to the degree of his knowledge and powers does his work, sometimes aided, sometimes checked, by his individualist philosophy, but succeeding ultimately in getting down a picture of human existence that is at once ugly, passionate, foolish, romantic, and profound.

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MY GREEK NOVEL

By Ellis Parker Butler

With Sketches by Clarence Day, Jr.

NOW that John Erskine has published his delightful novel of ancient Greek manners entitled "The Private Life of Helen of Troy" and since Edward Lucas White has written another, entitled "Helen", I am having my own Greek novel retyped and shall offer it to some reputable publisher.

While I have had more than usual pleasure from novels lately — "Little Ships", "The Venetian Glass Nephew", "Thunder on the Left", and so on — I think John Erskine's "Private Life of Helen of Troy" has given me the greatest pleasure of all. By this I do not mean only the pleasure of reading a book written in such a superb style.

Ægisthus will not wash the dishes

The dialogue, it is true, seemed to me to have the clarity of Mark Twain and Molière at their best and merely reading it was delightful, but it was a big satisfaction to me to read a book in which a whole lot of really eminent characters are killed off in a genuinely workmanship and offhand manner.

The plot of Professor Erskine's novel, while not so good as the plot of my own ancient Greek novel, is very close to what the plot of an ancient Greek novel should be. I did not think Edward Lucas White's plot was quite so good. I think Mr. White's plot would appeal more to architects because they would be interested in knowing whether a wooden horse should be a one man horse or a three man horse. I did get well excited when the ventilation problem was being discussed and I wished Mr. White had included a blueprint of the proposed ventilation system of the wooden horse, but to my notion there was not enough murder in his book. Quite a number of his characters were killed in battle; but I do not get the kick from a battle killing that I do from a nice clean bit of matricide or a skilfully staged example of papa-murder.

While Mr. White has Deiphobus and Paris killing Achilles in a quite legitimate battle, Professor Erskine, just as a starter or cocktail, has Agamemnon slaughter his daughter Iphigeneia. This makes Agamemnon's wife Clytemnestra a little peevish, for since Agamemnon is starting for the war and will

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be absent quite a while Clytemnestra has to stay at home, and she needed Iphigeneia to help with the housework. For this reason she takes Ægisthus as a sort of lefthand husband while Agamemnon is away — even if Ægisthus will not wash the dishes he can bring in the water and things like that. So when the war is over and Agamemnon comes home and finds that Ægisthus has been smoking his cigars all these years — or something — he gets cross. Naturally, Clytemnestra doesn't like that, so she kills him. And that, as my friend Gabe Bowman used to say at the Muscatine County Fair, is two babies down and two cigars!

This makes a good start and Clytemnestra is feeling sporty, so she kills Cassandra, a lady friend Agamemnon has brought home with him, and that is three babies down. It seems, however, that Clytemnestra and Agamemnon have a son named Orestes. Orestes is one of these modern fellows with queer ideas, and one of his ideas is that it was Ægisthus that killed his father Agamemnon. So Orestes goes home and kills Ægisthus. Four babies down! But it comes out in the paper that this was a mistake, so Orestes and his sister correct the mistake and kill their mother Clytemnestra. Five babies down! And while he is prancing around this way Orestes decides to make a good job of it and he kills Pyrrhus, a fellow he thinks is trying to flirt with his girl. Six babies down and six cigars!

That is what I would call a peppy plot. At the price Gabe Bowman used to pay for cigars those six cigars would have cost him twelve cents, and if you figure three balls for five cents and say the average ball thrower hit one baby for each three balls thrown, you can see that Gabe's profit on the deal would be a mere eighteen cents. From this you must deduct the wear and tear on the balls and a fair proportion of the five dollars Gabe had to pay the Muscatine

Eczema being stolen by Avoirdupois

County Fair Association for his permit. But, of course, a lot of people threw as many as twenty five cents' worth of balls at the babies and never hit any. On the whole I am afraid I prefer Professor Erskine's book to Mr. White's.

On the other hand the names in Mr. White's book are every bit as good as those in Professor Erskine's, and perhaps that is the important thing. I do enjoy getting away from novels that can't rise above grumpy Nordic Dakota farmers named Ole Oleson who ruin their wives' lives by keeping them down to one faded calico dress per decade. It is a pleasure to turn from these to kings and mighty warriors and fair ladies with names like Menelaos, Ægisthus, Eteoneus, Aithre, Deiphobus, Trœzen, Laocoon, and Pyrrhus.

My own Greek novel I wrote originally as a play — ten acts and thirteen interludes, the ten acts being divided

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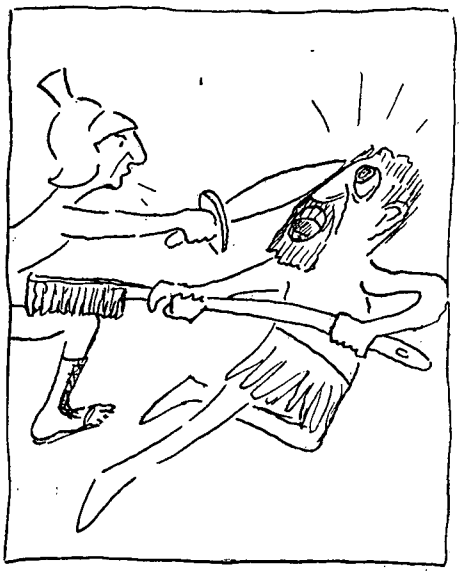

Halitosis has a brush with Prophylactic

into thirty six scenes. It was the story of Halitosis, king of Kolynos, whose wife Eczema had been stolen by Avoirdupois, king of Pyorrhœa. It was, of course, a tragedy.

When I took my tragedy around to the play producers they were kind but firm.

"A Greek tragedy in ten acts, thirteen interludes, and thirty six scenes", one of them said, "is too much. If you can cut your play down to fifteen minutes, change the scene to Wikiwiki and make it a bedroom scene with a classy little song and dance to begin it and a hulahula dance to wind it up, I might give it a tryout in Newark some Friday if you will pay the carfare both ways."

"Sir," I said patiently, "I think you are wrong about this. Let me ask you to use your brain, if any, or what have you? Consider the Italian opera. Think how the Italians of our great city crowd the Metropolitan Opera House on nights when the Italian operas are given. Then think of the vast numbers of Greeks in New York. The patronage of the Greeks alone would make my tragedy a success."

"I am sorry to have to deny that", he said. "You don't study the statistics or you would not talk that way. May I ask you what the Italians in New York do?"

"They run the fruit stands", I said.

"Exactly!" he said. "And they close their fruit stands at night and can attend the Italian operas. But the Greeks run the restaurants. When you have eaten your dinner at a Greek restaurant and have paid your bill you can go where you please — you can go to the theatre. But the Greek can't go. The Greek has to remain and wash the dishes. And you know Greek cooking, don't you? Have you ever stopped to consider what a lot of work it is to wash dishes when cooks use as much grease as the Greeks use? By the time the dishes are washed the play would be over."

"It wouldn't if you produced the entire ten acts, thirteen interludes, and thirty six scenes of my play", I said.

At this point the play producer pushed a button at the end of his desk and a young lady entered.

"Gwendolyn," he said, "ain't there anybody out there waiting to see me?"

"There's — now — nobody but that fellow who — now — always wants to borrow ten dollars off of you", she answered.

"Send him in! Send him in!" he said eagerly. "You see how busy I am this morning", he said, turning to me. "You got to excuse me. Gwendolyn, show the gentleman out."

And isn't the trouble with English and American fiction just that? Isn't it true that, for ten or twenty years, the Gwendolyns have been showing the gentlemen out? If you agree with me — if you, too, believe that the Gwen-

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dolyns have been showing the gentlemen out — I want to ask you something. I want to ask you what you mean by "gentlemen". I want to ask you what you mean by "Gwendolyns". Because I don't know; it doesn't seem to mean anything to me; it sounds like nonsense to me. It probably is nonsense.

Isn't what we mean rather that the Gwendolyns have been showing the gentlemen up. No, not upstairs, although I will admit that some of the novels — and, after all, what *is* Michael Arlen's place in American literature? I ask you this: Is he Gwendolyn? That, too, may sound like nonsense to me but I am not discouraged; it may seem to mean something to you. That's the beauty of writing criticism; almost any sort of nonsense seems to mean something to you. I find my greatest trouble in trying to know where to put the semicolons.

In my Greek novel I sweep all that realistic stuff aside — all semicolons and spelling and old farmer ladies who die miserably because the old man won't subscribe to "The Saturday Evening Post" — and I leap boldly into the romantic. I don't mean to tell the plot, because that would spoil the reading for you, but I can say that when Eczema has been stolen by Avoirdupois and taken to Pyorrhœa, her husband, Halitosis, goes to Pyorrhœa to search for her. His presence is not, of course, suspected. Approaching the castle of Avoirdupois, Halitosis meets Prophylactic, an Ipanaian, and has a brush with him. With his sword Halitosis cuts Prophylactic into four pieces, and leaves him at the side of the road, but the goddess Deodo joins the four pieces together with skewers and, except for the skewers, Pro-phy-lac-tic is as good as ever. The skewers show more or less.

Sterno plays a mournful air on the three stringed aspirin

It will be clear that all this is intensely interesting and there is a lot of thrill and anguish in it, especially where Eczema has to yield to Avoirdupois and his twin ruffians, Calorie and Vitamin. Avoirdupois wishes to overcome Eczema gently but she makes him scratch. There is a touching scene, too, when Halitosis stands looking at the citadel of Kolynos and sees that what he suspected is true, that Avoirdupois has Eczema. This is where Halitosis erects the altar and sacrifices his twin sons Hetrodyne and Neutrodyne to the goddess Antikamnia; and it is here that Eczema takes the two tablets after supper, chanting the Friday Afternoon Sacrifice Chant, No. 28 in the black book, chanting the first and last verses and omitting the second and third, while the slave, Sterno, plays a mournful air on the three stringed aspirin.

I hope my Greek novel will be a success, because I think an author needs a little success now and then. It encourages him to greater efforts.

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DIARY OF AN EASTERN JOURNEY

By Aldous Huxley

TAXILA. The country round Taxila, that ancient city where Alexander rested and found an ally, reminded me a little of the Roman Campagna. The outworks of the Himalayas play the part of the Alban and Sabine mountains. Ranges of woodless Frascatis and desiccated Tivolis subside into a grey and rolling plain. On sudden and unexpected eminences rising out of this plain stand the Indian equivalents of Nepi and Cività Castellana. And here and there, on hilltops, in the open ground below, lie the ruins of the various cities and temples which flourished and decayed, were born anew, only to be sacked and plundered, were re-edified, only to perish absolutely, between the year 1500 before our era and the year 500 after Christ.

First cousins, they seem — these ruins — of the tombs along the Appian Way, of Ostia and Hadrian's Villa (for ruins, whatever their date and country, have a strong family resemblance among themselves), and own brothers, I may add, to the inhabited villages nearby, which differ from the ruins only in being dirtier and more dilapidated.

The best preserved remains are those of the Buddhist monastery and temple of Jaulian. The temple is a *stupa* or relic mound and must have looked, when intact, with its dome and spire of superimposed umbrellas, something like the modern Burmese pagoda — which is, of course, only a local variation of the original Indian *stupa.* Today, nothing remains but the base of the main *stupa* with, all round it, a number of miniature *stupas* or votive shrines. The monastery adjoins the temple and resembles almost exactly the ruins of a Christian monastery. I noticed only one point of difference: the Buddhist monks had bathrooms.

Round the base of the *stupa* and in niches in the walls of the monastic cloisters, a quantity of sculpture in stone, stucco, and clay remains intact and in position. The Greek influence is manifest, even in this work of the third century A. D. The Hellenistic leaven was active for centuries. Ages passed and many barbarian invasions swept across the land before all traces of the Greek influence were quite eradicated and the art of northern India became again entirely oriental.

The quality of the work at Taxila is not particularly high. Far finer carving has been found at other sites in northwestern India. The best of it is now in the Peshawar Museum, where I was specially struck by some scenes from the life of Buddha represented in high relief on a series of small stone panels. These things have the vigor and dramatic force, with much of the beauty of composition characteristic of Italian Gothic sculpture. I remember two in particular — Buddha in the act of renouncing his family ties and Buddha preaching from the mouth of a cave — that might have been by Niccolo Pisano.

Between Peshawar and Lahore. At Peshawar we were seized with one of our periodical financial panics. Money,

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in this country, slips rapidly between the fingers, particularly between the fingers of the tourist. Great wads of it have to be handed out every time one gets into the train; for fares are high and distances enormous. No place in India seems to be less than three hundred miles from any other place; the longer journeys have to be measured in thousands. Financial panics are justifiable. We decided to travel second class as far as Lahore.

For the first hour or so we were alone in our compartment. We congratulated ourselves on having secured all the comfort and privacy of first class traveling at exactly half the price. In future, we decided, we would always travel second. But nature abhors a vacuum and our compartment was evidently the object of her special abhorrence. When the train stopped at Campbellpur, we were invaded. In the twinkling of an eye our luxurious emptiness was filled to overflowing with luggage and humanity. And what queer specimens of humanity! The leader of the party which now entered the compartment was a middle aged man wearing a yellow robe and, on his head, a kind of quilted bonnet with hanging ear flaps. He was profusely garlanded with yellow chrysanthemums and had been followed onto the platform by a large crowd of flower bearing admirers and devotees. Our ignorance of the language did not permit us to discover who this exalted person might be. But he was evidently some kind of high priest, some Hindu pope of considerable holiness, to judge by the respect which was paid him by his numerous retinue and his admirers. His passage along the line must have been well advertised; for at every station our compartment was invaded by a swarm of devotees who came to kiss the great man's feet and to crave a blessing, which in most cases he seemed too lazy to give. Even the guards and ticket collectors and station masters came in to pay their respects. The enthusiasm of one ticket collector was so great that he traveled about thirty miles in our already packed compartment, simply in order to be near the great man. He, meanwhile, passed the time by counting his money which was contained in a large brass bound box, by loudly eating and, later, dozing. Even at the stations he did not take the trouble to rouse himself, but reclined with closed eyes along his seat and passively permitted the faithful to kiss his boots. When one is as he evidently was, it is unnecessary to keep up appearances, behave decently, or do anything for one's followers. It is office and hereditary honor that claim the respect of a believing people, not personal merit. Judging by appearances, which are often deceptive, I should say that this particular holy man had no personal merit, but a very great office. His face, which had the elements of a fine and powerful face, seemed to have disintegrated and run to fat under the influence of a hoggish self indulgence. To look at, he was certainly one of the most repulsive human specimens I have ever seen. But of course he may in reality have been a saint and an ascetic, a preacher and a practiser of the moral doctrines formulated in the Gita, or even one of those pure souled oriental mystics who, we are told, are to leaven the materialism of our western civilization. He may have been, but I doubt it. All that we could be certain of was that he looked unpleasant and was undoubtedly dirty; also that he and his admirers exhaled the sour stink of garments long unwashed.

Tolstoy objected to too much cleanliness on the ground that to be too clean

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is a badge of class. It is only the rich who can afford the time and money to wash their bodies and shift their linen frequently. The laborer who sweats for his living and whose house contains no bathroom, whose wardrobe has no superfluous shirts, must stink. It is inevitable, and it is right and proper that he should. Work is prayer. Work is also stink. Therefore stink is prayer. So, more or less, argues Tolstoy, who goes on to condemn the rich for not stinking and for bringing up their children to have a prejudice against stink, however natural and even creditable. The non-stinker's prejudice against stink is largely a class prejudice, and therefore to be condemned.

Tolstoy is quite right, of course. We who were brought up on open windows, clean shirts, hot baths, and sanitary plumbing find it hard to tolerate twice breathed air and all the odors which crowded humanity naturally exhales. Our physical education has been such that the majority of our fellow beings, particularly those less fortunately circumstanced than ourselves, seem to us slightly or even extremely disgusting. A man may have strong humanitarian principles; but if he happens to have been brought up as a bath taking, shirt changing lover of fresh air, he will have to overcome certain physical repugnances before he can bring himself to put those principles into practice to the extent, at any rate, of associating freely with men and women whose habits are different from his own. It is a deplorable fact; but there it is. Tolstoy's remedy is that we should all stink together. Other reformers desire to make it economically possible for every man to have as many hot baths, and to change his shirt as often, as do the privileged non-stinkers at the present day. Personally, I prefer the second alternative.

Meanwhile, the crowd in our compartment increased. The day, as it advanced, grew hotter. And suddenly the holy man woke up and began to hoick and spit all over the compartment. By the time we reached Rawalpindi we had decided that the twenty two rupees we should economize by remaining seven hours longer among our second class brothers were not enough. We had our luggage transferred into a first class carriage and paid the difference. The only other occupant of the compartment was an English official of the Kashmir state, bound for his winter headquarters at Jammu. He was a dim little man; but at any rate his linen was clean and he was not in the least holy. Nobody came in to kiss his feet.

For the rest of the journey, I ruminated my anti-clericalism. Indian friends have assured me that the power of the priests is less than it was and goes on rapidly waning. I hope they are right and that the process may be further accelerated. And not in India alone. There is still, for my taste, too much kissing of amethyst rings as well as of slippered feet. There are still too many black coats in the West, too many orange ones in the East. *Ecrasez l'infâme!* My traveling companion had made me, for the moment, a thoroughgoing Voltairian.

It is a simple creed, Voltairianism. In its simplicity lies its charm, lies the secret of its success — and also of its fallaciousness. For, in our muddled human universe, nothing so simple can possibly be true, can conceivably "work". If the *infâme* were squashed, if insecticide were scattered on all the clerical beetles, whether black or yellow, if pure rationalism became the universal creed, all would automatically

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go well. So runs the simple creed of the anti-clericals. It is too simple and the assumptions on which it is based are too sweeping. For, to begin with, is the *infâme* always infamous and are the beetles invariably harmful? Obviously not. Nor can it be said that the behavior value of pure rationalism (whatever the truth value of its underlying assumptions) is necessarily superior to the behavior value of irrational beliefs which may be and, in general, almost certainly are untrue. And further, the vast majority of human beings are not interested in reason or satisfied with what it teaches. Nor is reason itself the most satisfactory instrument for the understanding of life. Such are a few of the complications which render so simple a formula as the anti-clerical's inapplicable to our real and chaotic life.

Man's progress has been contingent on his capacity to organize societies. It is only when protected by surrounding society from aggression, when freed by the organized labor of society from the necessity of hunting or digging for his food, it is only, that is to say, when society has tempered and to a great extent abolished the struggle for personal existence, that the man of talent can exercise his capacities to the full. And it is only by a well organized society that the results of his labors can be preserved for the enrichment of succeeding generations. Any force that tends to the strengthening of society is, therefore, of the highest biological importance. Religion is obviously such a force. All religions have been unanimous in encouraging, within limits that have tended to grow wider and ever wider, the social, altruistic, humanitarian proclivities of man and in condemning his antisocial, self assertive tendencies. Those who like to speak anthropomorphically would be justified in saying that religion is a device employed by the Life Force for the promotion of its evolutionary designs. But they would be justified in adding that religion is also a device employed by the Devil for the dissemination of idiocy, intolerance, and servile objection. My fellow passenger from Campbellpur did something, no doubt, to encourage brotherly love, forbearance, and mutual helpfulness among his flock. But he also did his best to deepen their congenital stupidity and prevent it from being tempered by the acquirement of correct and useful knowledge, he did his best to terrify them with imaginary fears into servility and to flatter them with groundless hopes into passive contentment with a life unworthy of human beings. What he did in the name of the evolutionary Life Force, he undid in the name of the Devil. I cherish a pious hope that he did just a trifle more than he undid and that the Devil remained, as the result of his ministry, by ever so little the loser.

Lahore. The Lahore Museum is rich in Indo-Persian water colors of the Mogul period. A few of them are genuinely good. But all are in the highest degree "amusing" (and in these days, after all, it is to the amusing rather than to the good in art that we pay our tribute of admiration). The subjects of these paintings are mostly scenes of domestic and courtly life, as it was lived in the great imperial days. If we may judge by these representations, the distractions of the Moguls were remarkably simple, simpler even than those in vogue among the grandees of Europe at the same period. Hunting, war, and love making, from time immemorial the sports of kings, were practised as copiously and patronized as freely by western kings as by their

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oriental cousins. But the amusement of "looking at the clouds" was never, so far as I am aware, a favorite pastime among the great of Europe. In India, on the contrary, it seems to have been one of the principal occupations of kings and queens. So ordinary was the pastime that the Mogul artists found it necessary to invent a special pictorial convention to represent it. These cloud gazers, of whom quite a surprising number are portrayed in the pictures of the Lahore collection, are represented as standing or reclining on the roofs of their palaces looking up at a sky full of pitch black vapors, against which a flight of somewhat heraldic swans stands out with a peculiar brilliance.

Innocent pleasures! The capacity to enjoy them is perhaps a sign of the superiority of oriental civilization to our own. To Europeans, I am afraid, this "looking at the clouds" would seem a little tedious. But then, we are barbarians and entirely ignorant of the art of living. One of the choicest inventions in the field of this epicurean art, of which we hurried westerners know so little, is frequently represented in these pictures. It is shown in almost all the numerous love scenes between black bearded nawabs and fawn eyed, trousered beauties which form the nucleus of this delightful collection. Any fool, any savage, can make love — of a kind. But it needs a *viveur* of genius to think of combining amorous dalliance — on carpets, be it added, of the most exquisite Persian design — with the leisured smoking of a silver and crystal hookah. That, surely, is true art.

By the kindness of our hospitable friends at Lahore, we were able to hear a good deal of Indian music, both classical and popular. Indian music is innocent of any harmony more subtle than that with which the bagpipe has made us familiar — the drone on the dominant. It knows of no form more highly organized than that of the air with variations. It is played on but few instruments (two kinds of lute and a kind of wire stringed viola are the commonest) and these few are, alas, rapidly being ousted by a form of miniature American harmonium, pumped with one hand and played with one finger of the other. Yet, in spite of these limitations, Indian music is surprisingly rich and various. How rich and how various depends entirely upon the individual player. For in India, where music has never been committed to writing but is an affair of tradition tempered by personal inspiration, the part of the interpreter is more important even than with us. Of European music even a bad player can give us some idea; and those who have acquired the art of reading a score can get their musical pleasure through the eye alone. Not so in India. Here the performer is all important. He is everything: not only the interpreter, but also the repository and publisher of music — Breitkopf and Hartel as well as Paganini; not only the guardian of ancient tradition, but also the inspired improvisatore. The bad performer can give you nothing of Indian music.

At Lahore, we were fortunate in hearing a most accomplished performer on the sitar, or Indian lute. He was a middle aged man with a walrus mustache and an explosion of most musical long hair, in the centre of which he wore a red plush cap embroidered with gold. He looked, I thought, like a reproduction in brown of an old fashioned German pianist. But how humble, in comparison with the lordly artists of Europe, how very definitely an inferior the poor man was! He sat

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on the floor awaiting our good pleasure, played when he was told, stopped at a word in the middle of a musical phrase, played on uncomplainingly through our conversation. Music in India has strangely come down in the world. From being, it is said, the accomplishment of princesses, it has come to be the monopoly of prostitutes. Courtezans are the only professional female musicians in India, and very many of the male professionals are only the hereditary teachers of courtezans. Our musician had climbed a little way above his congenital station in life; he gave lessons to amateurs.

The sitar is a long necked guitar, bellied with the half of a bisected pumpkin (and having, sometimes, the second half attached like a goitre to its neck), wire strung and played with a plectrum. From this lute a skilled musician can draw an extraordinary variety of sounds — from sharp staccato to notes long drawn, as though produced by a bow; from clear, full, ringing sounds to the ukulele's whining slither through fractions of a tone; from loudly martial to sweet and tender. The melody is played only on the first string, the remaining wires (tuned to sound the dominant, in various octaves, of the key to whose tonic the first string is tuned) being used to produce the accompanying drone.

Our lutanist's repertory was large and he was prepared to play anything we asked for. Folk songs in the pentatonic blacknote scale — first cousins, these, to what we are accustomed to regard as characteristically Scottish airs — were followed by classical pieces, in which the most elaborate variations were embroidered on themes that sounded now Gregorian, now like a rambling and, to western ears, rather tuneless folk song. We heard specimens of the music that is supposed to be played only in the morning and specimens of that which is intended for the night. We heard the delightful song that is meant to be sung in cloudy weather. We heard the snake charmer's music, built up round a most snaky phrase of descending semitones, and the camel driver's song, wailing and romantic. Generally the instrument sounded alone. But sometimes the minstrel lifted his shaggy head and gave vent to shrill tenor notes, neighed out from somewhere between the nose and the upper gullet. Strange sounds and to our ears somewhat ludicrous, particularly when taken in conjunction with certain nods and vibrations of the head, certain almost girlishly coquettish gestures made with a hand that was lifted for the purpose from the sounding strings.

I was able to understand and appreciate the music tolerably well. All of it, that is, except the music played, traditionally, when a man gives up the world for the life of meditation. One of these renunciatory pieces — a most elaborate, classical affair — was played for our benefit. But I must confess that, listen as I might, I was unable to hear anything particularly mournful or serious, anything specially suggestive of self sacrifice in the piece. To my western ears it sounded much more cheerful than the dance which followed it.

Emotions are everywhere the same; but the artistic expression of them varies from age to age and from one country to another. We are brought up to accept the conventions current in the society into which we are born. This sort of art, we learn in childhood, is meant to excite laughter; that, to evoke our tears. Such conventions vary with great rapidity, even in the same country. There are Elizabethan

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dances that sound as melancholy to our ears as little funeral marches. Conversely, we are made to laugh by the "Anglo-Saxon attitudes" of the holiest personages in the drawings and miniatures of earlier centuries. Only with the aid of an historically trained imagination can we see or hear as our ancestors heard and saw. Remoteness in space divides no less than remoteness in time, and to the untrained auditor or spectator the artistic conventions of strangers are as little comprehensible as those of his own fathers.

It is in the visual arts that the conventions for the expression of emotions vary most widely. This is due, I suppose, to two main causes, of a character respectively physiological and intellectual. Form and color have very little direct physiological effect upon the perceiving organism. Sounds, on the other hand, act directly on the nerves and can stimulate, exasperate, daze, bemuse, as forms and colors can never do. Certain types of rhythmical sounds produce certain almost specific effects upon the nervous system. It is obvious that in forming his conventions of expression the musician must take into account these specific physiological effects of sound. Drum beats and loud brassy notes sounded in regular, even time are specifically exciting; it therefore follows that the convention for expressing the martial emotions can never involve slow croonings of violins in an undulating three-four time, or elaborate birdlike warblings on the flute. Thus it comes about that there is a certain family likeness common to the conventions of expression of every system of music — a family likeness which does not exist among the conventions of the various systems of pictorial art. But even in music the differences between the conventions of expression are very great. Music affects us physiologically through rhythm and the volume and quality of sounds. Conventions which we have come to regard as fundamental but which do not involve these particular factors are found, when we compare them with other conventions of other systems, to be purely arbitrary. Thus, what we regard as the fundamental difference between major and minor keys — the minor being for us conventionally melancholy — is not fundamental at all, but the result of a recent and arbitrary convention of western musicians. Before the seventeenth century the convention did not exist even in European music, and in oriental music it is not thought of, jolly and martial music being pitched in the minor.

So much for physiology. There are other and purely intellectual reasons why the conventions of expression should vary more widely in the different systems of visual art than they do in the systems of music. The visual arts lend themselves to story telling and the symbolical exposition of philosophical theories and religious dogmas. Music does not. Thus, to western eyes, the picture of a man with four arms, an elephant's head, and a lotus growing out of his navel seems grotesque. But an orthodox Hindu would see nothing comical in it. To us pictures of monsters and impossible hybrids are, by convention, funny. To him they are symbolical of the highest truths.

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LIFE THROUGH FICTION

By Charles A. Bennett

III: LOYALTIES

Most plays or novels worth the name do more than tell a story, portray a character: they reflect an attitude toward life, a philosophy on the part of the author. Moreover, since they present individual situations rather than "cases", they suggest that to live well is not a matter of being guided by authoritative rules whether of church or of academic precept or of tradition, but is rather a fine art. The aim of this series of articles — of which this is the third — is to take a few literary works and discuss some of the ethical issues involved. The clinical method employed is designed to bring home to readers how drama and fiction contribute to the criticism of life, in the sense of an intelligent understanding of life's problem.

Synopsis

FERDINAND DE LEVIS, a Jew, described as "young, rich, and new", is staying with the Winsors at their country place near Newmarket. The other guests are General Canynge, Captain Dancy — fast, reckless, desperately hard up — his wife Mabel, and Margaret Orme, a society girl. Some time ago Dancy had sold De Levis a mare which at the time he thought rather a weed. De Levis has just sold it for a thousand pounds cash. On the night when the play opens this money is stolen from him. He had put the notes under his pillow, locked the door of his room (but left the window open), and gone down the corridor to take a bath. On his return the notes have disappeared. He goes at once to his host and tells him. General consternation. The servants are sent for and interviewed. The guests come in and discuss the situation. The police are summoned. Two things become clear. First, that in contrast to De Levis, whose only desire is naturally to get to the bottom of the affair, Winsor and his guests, outraged at the suggestion of a theft in the house, are concerned to avoid anything like a scene and still more a scandal. Secondly, De Levis, by many subtle indications from servants and guests alike, is made to feel an outsider. A man should not have as much money as that anyhow. And think of his actually locking his door! And then to insist on sending for the police! The effect of their attitude on a nature oversensitive to any implied criticism of his social position or his race is only to make him more obstinate in his resolution to thrash the thing out.

De Levis discovers unmistakable evidence that the thief is Dancy, who had come in by the window. He accuses Dancy to Winsor and Canynge. Even though they have also come to the same conclusion about the identity of the thief they decide that they will stand by him as against the Jew, for the issue has insensibly changed from a question of justice to a conflict of loyalties. Officers and gentlemen must stick by one another against an outsider who cannot be expected to feel the claims of their code. If De Levis persists in his accusation and in his demand for the return of the money they threaten to blackball him at a club of

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which he wishes to become a member and to ruin him socially.

They fulfil their threat. De Levis, hearing at the club that he has been blackballed, openly denounces Dancy to some of the members. They confront him with Dancy and urge Dancy to take the matter to court "for the honour of the club". Dancy makes a poor showing and refuses. De Levis has meanwhile decided to institute proceedings against Dancy. Dancy, realizing that the game is up, tries to persuade his wife (to whom he has not confessed) to leave the country with him. Doubts assail her. She chokes them down and urges him to fight the case. "Ronny! If all the world — *I'd* believe in you. You know I would." "That's all right Mabs. That's all right. . . . Well, what shall we do?" "Oh! Let's go to that lawyer — let's go at once!"

While the case is proceeding, three months later, Twisden, Dancy's solicitor, unexpectedly receives information that enables him to trace some of the missing notes. They had been paid by Dancy to a woman who had claims upon him. Twisden's partner urges him to overlook his client's guilt. "If De Levis got these notes back, and the rest of the money, anonymously?" "But the case, Graviter; the case." "I don't believe this alters what I've been thinking." "Thought is one thing — knowledge is another. There's duty to our profession. Ours is a fine calling. On the faith of solicitors a very great deal hangs." Twisden tells Dancy's lawyer, who thereupon throws up the case. Before Dancy can escape from England the police come to his flat with the warrant for his arrest. His wife now knows all, but she sends Dancy into the bedroom and herself opens the door to the inspector. She pleads with him. "Just half an hour! Couldn't you? It's two lives — two whole lives. We've only been married four months. Come back in half an hour. It's such a little thing — nobody will know. Nobody. Won't you?"

"No, no — don't you try to undermine me — I'm sorry for you; but don't you try it!" As the inspector turns the handle of the bedroom door there is a pistol shot within. Dancy has killed himself. He leaves a note for his friend Colford. "This is the only decent thing I can do. It's too damned unfair to her. It's only another jump. A pistol keeps faith. Look after her." Margaret Orme, hearing it read, exclaims wildly, "Keeps faith! We've all done that. It's not enough."

The subtitle of this play might well be: "A Tragedy with a Moral". As for the tragedy — that is summed up in Margaret Orme's reply to Mabel Dancy's claim that "loyalty comes before everything": "Ye-es, but loyalties cut up against each other sometimes you know." And she adds later, "We all cut each other's throats from the best of motives." It is precisely what is good in the characters of these people that becomes a source of evil and precipitates the catastrophe. Esprit de corps, loyalty to one's race or nation, professional conscientiousness, personal fidelity — these are excellent things, yet, in this play, from the moment that they are touched into life they become agents of destruction. De Levis is stiffened in his attitude. Winsor, Canynge, and the rest think only of their class or their code or their club. The old solicitor wraps himself firmly in the cloak of professional duty. Mabel Dancy resolves to "fight tooth and nail". It has been said that in our hours of weakness our very strength fights against us. Their capacity for

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loyalty is the conspicuous excellence of these characters, yet in their weakness it works to their undoing; it generates obstinacy, cruelty, injustice, and hatred. The art of the dramatist consists in suggesting that, given these characters, with their training, their ideals, and their points of sensitiveness or scruple, and given this particular situation, the result is inevitable. That, in brief, seems to be the genesis and the development of the tragedy. There is nothing to be said except that life is like that. Which is perhaps all that the artist, as artist, wanted to show us.

But the tragedy has a moral, and the moral at any rate offers opportunities for discussion. "Keeps faith!" cries Maragaret Orme. "We've all done that. It's not enough." When I ask myself why it is not enough I find that I have to distinguish in this play three kinds of loyalty, different both in nature and value. They may be called social or group loyalty, professional loyalty, and personal fidelity.

The first is exemplified, on the one hand, in the attitude of De Levis; on the other, in that of Winsor and his friends. Men belong to various groups and participate vicariously in the fortunes of their group. If my country, my university, my family, my club, win a victory, that is my victory also; if they are insulted, I am insulted too. A man's life and interests for the most part benefit from the amplitude thus conferred on them. For it is a mistake to suppose that there is any necessary conflict between loyalty and a sane individualism. The individual who has a cause to which he is devoted is likely to be a happier and a more significant human being than the man who prides himself on an independence which rejects all social claims. But there is a danger in the fact that one's country, one's family, and the rest do not stand for any effective work in the world that can be easily identified. What is the function or "job" that my family or my country has to perform? It is hard to say. And since one cannot define the end to which the group is instrumental one naturally begins to think of the group as an end in itself. Its solidarity and dignity now become of paramount importance, and to these even moral issues are subordinated. This is what has happened with Winsor and Canynge as well as with De Levis. Canynge says to De Levis, "You appear to have your breed on the brain, sir." De Levis might have retorted that Canynge has "officers and gentlemen" on the brain. Both sides have reached a point where they are unable to discuss the case on its merits or to play fair, because they are primarily concerned to defend some vague and idealized corporate entity in the background. It is this kind of unintelligent loyalty to an established group simply *as* a group that is the most pernicious in its consequences. It sunders men into clans and classes and castes and sects, suspicious, snobbish, bigoted, intransigent. The psychologist, I suppose, would call it herd instinct — as a scientific classification, absurd, but as a means of conveying the moral flavor of the thing perhaps not inappropriate.

The old solicitor and the police inspector represent a second kind of loyalty. The line of their duty has been marked out for them by their professional undertakings and they cannot depart from it without lowering their standards. Our sympathy, as spectators, is divided. On the one hand, a departure from the code seems but a slight sacrifice to make when the lives and happiness of at least two human beings are at stake. Turn a blind eye, we are inclined to say, to your profes-

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sional integrity and save these two young people. On the other hand, reflection shows that we dare not allow men the right to violate their instructions or to make exceptions to professional obligations whenever they see fit. The resulting insecurity would be intolerable. This division of our sympathy reflects the familiar conflict between the rigidity of principle and the plasticity and variability of life. A moral principle must undertake to cover all contingencies relevant to it; the man of principle is the man you can rely on. But life is continually presenting us with unique situations for which our principles do not provide. Thus we know that there are occasions when one must lie, when the soldier must disobey orders, when the doctor does right to put a merciful if unauthorized end to a patient's hopeless sufferings. Yet because of the weakness of human nature we dare not publicly admit this in formulating our moral code; we should have a crop of doubtful or positively mischievous exceptions. And so we state our moral commands — Be truthful, Be obedient, and the rest — as though they held unconditionally. Thus arise those dilemmas in conduct where whichever course a man adopts he does wrong: if he violates principle, he does wrong; if he sticks to principle he fails to do justice to the novel elements in the situation before him. That is precisely the kind of dilemma in which Twisden and the inspector find themselves. That is what gives to their loyalty a tragic poignancy and inevitability lacking in the first problem.

If we still feel inclined to question the worth of their kind of loyalty I suppose it is because we fear that they will err on the side of conservatism. Their allegiance to the standards or etiquette of their professions will become mechanical. The formal observance of the code will become more important in their eyes than real contributions to human welfare. The letter of the law will kill the spirit. We dread a too zealous loyalty as we dread a too zealous moral idealism: such terrible things are done in their name. We cut each other's throats — from the best of motives.

Mabel Dancy's loyalty to her husband has the same quality of unswerving faithfulness. Hers is the "dog loyalty" that endures through thick and thin. Although, to a superficial regard, it looks as blind and mechanical, we do not condemn it. On the contrary, we prize it. Husband and wife, mother and son, friend and friend — in such intimate personal relationships the attitude which says "No matter what you do I shall continue to believe in you and to stand by you" seems beautiful and proper. Why? There is surely nothing admirable in believing something in face of all evidence to the contrary. That is mere stupid obstinacy. Such a policy can be justified only on a certain theory of what love is. Love is not mere emotion: it is first and foremost a revelation. Two persons who love each other have won an insight into each other's personality which is based not so much on actual performance as on immediate intuition. Love confers a vision of what the other person really is, that essence of him which is so often concealed rather than revealed by overt speech and conduct. The lover, then, is not so much blind to what the world calls the facts or the evidence as in possession of additional evidence. The loyalty that accompanies love is the faith in that vision. As for its practical value I think we may say this: that often the only way by which an individual can be recalled to his best self

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is by knowing another person who unchangeably treats him as though that best self were his real self. Faithfulness may thus reawaken the quality in which it believes. So the mysterious impartiality of a God who maketh His sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good may soften the heart of the offender. This kind of loyalty is not a substitute for what I have called vision or insight, but after the mutual revelation has once occurred, if it fade from the mind of one, the faithfulness of the other is justified as its abiding witness and representative.

The preceding analysis helps us to formulate the moral of the play. What is attacked is not loyalty as such but the disastrous doctrine that loyalty comes before everything. That doctrine would be valid only in a perfect society where all the proper objects of human devotion had been discovered and established and where, in consequence, there was no work for either criticism or innovation to perform. Make it supreme in an admittedly imperfect society and you put a ban upon originality whether in the person of the critic, the reformer, the revolutionary, or the prophet. By persisting in conserving the established order of social groupings or morals or institutions political, economic, or ecclesiastical, you conserve what is bad along with what is good. Legitimate criticism or protest is branded as "kicking" or "knocking", innovation as crankiness, eccentricity, or "Bolshevism". The means through which social improvement might come are all dismissed from consideration as forms of disloyalty.

There is a kind of loyalty which hardly figures in this play, although Twisden and the inspector come nearest to displaying its temper. A brief description of it may help to modify the generally unfavorable judgment with which Galsworthy leaves us. I mean a man's loyalty to his "job". The ship's company who must bring the ship to port no matter what the hazards or the difficulties may be, the doctor and the clergyman whose duty may require them to face the risk of infection or may summon them out in all weathers and at any hour. We may note three distinguishing marks about it. First, as contrasted with the loyalties of a De Levis or a Winsor or a Mabel Dancy which chime in all too nicely with their natural desires, it costs something: it demands sacrifices. Not that sacrifice in itself is praiseworthy, but it measures the amount of a man's disinterestedness. Secondly, it is given not to a social group as such, but to something less narrowly personal — to "the job". Yet it binds men together by the social tie of partnership in a common undertaking which they have resolved to see through. But the social tie does not come first: the partners are loyal to one another because they are first loyal to their enterprise. Thirdly, the job is not a vague cause or ideal: there is a perfectly definite thing to be done: the ship has to be saved; the sick man has to be visited. Thus loyalty by being made practical escapes the danger of evaporating into emotion or sentimentality. It here possesses its proper worth just because, instead of "coming before everything", it is subordinated to the concrete good that is to be done. A man sees that first and then is loyal to his commitment.

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NEW LAMPS OR OLD

By Clemence Dane

"Now you speak of old lamps, I know not whether the Princess has taken notice of one that lies upon the cornice: whomever it belongs to, he will not be very much displeased in finding a new one instead."

Now this lamp of which the slave spoke, was the very wonderful lamp which had been the cause of Aladdin's great success.

— The Arabian Nights

The authorities of the Tate Gallery have decided to take no steps in the matter of the request from an artist, of world wide celebrity, whose painting, executed twenty years ago, now hangs in the Gallery, asking that it might be removed from public exhibition and burned. The artist wrote, asking that the picture be withdrawn from Public exhibition as being "the world's worst picture".

— Observer, October 25, 1925

I WAS listening the other day to an argument between a Writer and a Reader upon the question — has an author any right to alter his own books once they have been given to the public? The dialogue was a curious and instructive one, for the Reader was praising an early novel of the Writer's, and the Writer didn't agree. The Reader thought it was the best thing the Writer had ever done, while the Writer regarded that early book of his as a mere sowing of literary wild oats.

"It's all wrong", said the Writer: "I realize that now. I was dreadfully young when I wrote it."

"Yes", said the Reader, "it has the charm of youth."

"My dear creature, I was a mere beginner", said the Writer.

"But a beginner", said the Reader, "has a new point of view."

"The point of view of the amateur!"

"That's what I liked", said the Reader: "I liked the style — fresh, unsophisticated —"

"Adjectival prettiness! I never look at it without wanting a blue pencil. Well, it's out of print, thank God! And when I reissue, I shall remodel the whole thing — eliminate the interminable descriptions, cut out the pages of character analysis, yes, and rewrite those ridiculous love scenes that make me blush — shorten the last scene and —"

"Ruin the book!" said the Reader. And then the row began! The Writer vowed that the book was his own book and he the final judge of it, and that, by all his gods of art, he had a right, indeed a duty, to improve the bantling by the light of his later experience, and that anyway what he did with his own property was his own business, and he would be obliged if other folk would leave him to mind it! The Reader retorted that the book in question had been his bible and his bedbook since the month it was published, and sooner than find favorite passages omitted and strange, cold, unfriendly new ones added, he would — well, he wouldn't like to say what he would do to the author. For the author, he contended, though he certainly had written it once upon a time (and many thanks, and what a genius, and all that!) had long since delivered up his rights in it to him, the Gentle Reader, to whom, with all its amazing virtues and its beloved faults, it belonged, now and forever, Amen!

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To which the Writer returned heatedly that the book was part of him, his own soul, his spiritual child —

"Exactly," replied the Reader, heated in his turn, "and you've no right to chop off your own child's nose because you don't like the shape of its face."

"Analogy isn't argument!" said the Writer. "I only want to change it for the better."

"How do you know it's for the better?" says the Reader.

"Don't I know my own book?" says the Writer.

"I'm not so sure", says the Reader. "You're out of touch with it: you said so yourself! You've grown away from it. Now I, who know nothing about writing, know that book of yours by heart. I've lived with it for twenty years. But now, when I want a new copy, I'm to receive a different version? Thank you! Oh, I know all the arguments! It's a new lamp, copper, very well polished. The slave persuaded the Princess of China in precisely the same words two thousand years ago. But the lamp that she gave up so easily was the magic one. Isn't that so?" He appealed to me and then the situation became strained, for I firmly agreed with them both. As a maker of books I shared the Writer's indignantly possessive — "My own stuff! Why shouldn't I?" — while all the reader in me sympathized with his antagonist, as I remembered the cold fury that overtook me on discovering what Kipling had done to some of his poems in his inclusive edition. There was that delicious sketch of the English in "Actions and Reactions", for instance:

In telegraphic sentences, half swallowed at the ends,
They hint a matter's inwardness — and there the matter ends.
And while the Celt is talking from Valencia to Kirkwall,
The English — Ah, the English! — don't say anything at all!

"And he changes the first line to 'half nodded to their friends'!" interrupted my temporary ally, the Gentle Reader: "ruins it! And do you remember Gallio's song in the same book? — 'A labourer's hire denied' is changed to 'Cæsar's rule denied'!"

"And isn't it an improvement?" demanded the Writer. Unfortunately, the Reader and I had, in this case, to agree with him, and the admission, of course, encouraged him to further quotation. It appeared that George Moore made a habit of tinkering. What about the revision of "Hyperion"? Were there not two endings to "The Light that Failed"? Finally, there was Charlotte Brontë's singular feat of presenting the same story twice over. Was not all the best of "The Professor" embodied in "Villette"? Zoraide of the earlier story becomes Madame Beck: Frances divides into Lucy and Paulina: and Lucy is also comically a reincarnation of the Professor himself: whole scenes — the tearing of the notebook, for example, and the locking of Dolores into the book cupboard — are to be found in both stories.

"And", concluded the Writer, "is not 'Villette', that mature second thought, Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece?"

"Agreed!" said the Reader.

"Can you call 'The Professor' anything but a failure?"

I hesitated. The Reader chuckled:

"Can't you see that, success or failure, she adores 'The Professor'? Can't you comprehend that there is such a thing as first love where a book is concerned? Can't you see that no reader desires or seeks the perfection

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that you writers seek? Book or human being, the faults are part of the charm. One would hate not to find them there."

"That reminds me", I said, "of an article that I read yesterday in a woman's paper on 'How to Keep a Husband'! There was a good deal about charm in it, but the final maxim ran — 'Don't move the furniture about!' Now the writer of that article knew more about human nature than —"

"Than he does!" finished the Reader, nodding at his opponent. "A familiar book is a spiritual home: you know what you will find in it: you don't want the furniture moved. Do you remember the story of Rossetti and his picture? Rossetti made a painting of Lucretia, after poisoning her husband, washing her long white fingers in a bowl held by an attendant. And when he had done it he was for a while satisfied. Well he might have been, for the photograph taken of it records that it was a masterly thing, a portrait of an evil spirit in a lovely body. But later, when his style and his taste had changed, he got hold of the picture again and began to 'improve' that stiff remote piece of woman's beauty. He redrew, repainted, re-designed, till, lo, it was a new picture, a rich, heavy, full blown creature, all curves and cunning, a woman of the earth, gross and soulless. The faults of his youth, indeed, he had painted out, but only to replace them by the mannerisms of his maturity."

"Nevertheless", commented the Writer, "I respect Rossetti for doing what he did. An artist ought never to be satisfied."

And though the Reader continued to remonstrate, I agreed with him there! For it takes great humility and greater courage to risk spoiling your best in the effort to make it better still.

The discussion was still in my mind when the postman arrived with a new batch of books. It was a good haul. There was a new Masefield, a new Maurice Baring, even a new — yes, indeed, after a hundred years — a new Jane Austen: a delicately riotous fragment of a novel about a new watering place. So our great-grandmothers had their "Mushroom Towns" also! Queer how modern they, or how old fashioned we are! There was a collection of stories in the "Potash and Perlmutter" vein, and a new novel by the author of "Tell England", the study of a girl's youth, enough like the real thing to make you wonder and, with certain amused feminine reservations, applaud. There were two new romances woven round the Young Pretender, "The Flight of the Heron" and "The Golden Fleece", to add to my history and romance list; though I still reckon A. T. Sheppard's solid and "difficult" "Brave Earth" (a tale of Henry VIII's days) as the best in this kind of the past year, with "The Unhurrying Chase" a close second. Last came two new novels by Oliver Onions — "The Spite of Heaven" and "Whom God hath Sundered".

I say "new", but when I had read "The Spite of Heaven" with the graceless and unjudging haste that is inevitable with the first reading of a book by a favorite author, and turned to the second, I got a surprise. "Whom God hath Sundered" is not a new lamp, but three old and magical ones, a rearrangement in one volume of that startling trilogy, "In Accordance with the Evidence", "The Debit Account", and "The Story of Louie". Here indeed was an ally for the Writer!

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But before discussing the rearrangement of the three novels, it is worth pausing to consider the work of Oliver Onions as a whole. Indeed, to receive by the same post the last book of the prewar and the last book of the afterwar period of any writer of distinction, makes such a review inevitable, and Oliver Onions occupies a peculiar position in the ranks of modern letters, if indeed he frequents the ranks at all. As a literary figure he always brings to mind the wolf Wontolla in that tale of the second Jungle Book, "Red Dog", "for Wontolla means outlier — one who lies out from any pack!" and it is one of the most interesting peculiarities of this novelist that, though he has set at least two fashions, he follows none. Once having indicated a path he usually turns aside into another one without much caring, one imagines, whether he is followed or not. Indeed his curious indifference to the effect of his work is shown, not only in his persistent choice of subjects that are caviar to the general, but also, and less justifiably, by his countenancing various publishers' sins of omission. "The Spite of Heaven", for instance, bears on the page facing the title page, beneath the customary "By the same author", his titles "Peace in Our Time" and "Ghosts in Daylight": nowhere is a hint given to the reader who has appreciated the new volume that Oliver Onions is also the author of "Widdershins", "Mushroom Town", "Tales of a Far Riding", "The Tower of Oblivion", and a dozen more. The owner of "Widdershins" or "The Tower of Oblivion" would be justified in assuming either to be a first novel for all hint of other writings to be found in the usual place for such lists. "Peace in Our Time" gives no indication that its author has also written, in "In Accordance with the Evidence" and its successors, one of the most dramatic studies of the psychology of a murderer since the publication of "Markheim". And in "Widdershins" there is no suggestion that its author has ever written a full length novel.

It seems to me that the reader has therefore a grievance against Mr. Onions. An author has no right so to tantalize and to make difficult for him his pursuit of books that attract him: and Oliver Onions's books have a lasting attraction for a reader who enjoys using his brains and his imagination, who does not regard novel reading as a mild form of drugging. There is a quality, a strength, a variety of incident, and a beauty of phrase in them that turns any reader who has once encountered, let us say, "The Tower of Oblivion", into a literary Oliver Twist: he wants to read more of these bewildering volumes. For indeed the later books can bewilder, especially when they are compared with the simplicity of the earlier work. Oliver Onions's first notable books, "Little Devil Doubt", "Good Boy Seldom", "Mushroom Town", for all their beautiful manipulation of language and embroidery of scenes, are harsh, uncompromising portraits of men and women and societies. These novels have all, different as they are in plot, one underlying idea: they are bitter and indignant exposures of that something in the human being which says, when it sees a flower, "Let's pick it!" or — you remember the "Punch" cartoon — "Here's a view! Let's spoil it!" This passionate disgust at civilized man's itch for destruction and defilement is still to be found in Oliver Onions's books. The harsh early invention, "Little Devil Doubt", has for its motto a nursery rhyme (one feels that the irony of such a jingle's being

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sung in the nursery has been appreciated by Mr. Onions):

Here come I, Little Devil Doubt,
If you don't give me Money, I'll sweep you all out!
Money I want, and Money I crave —
If you don't give me Money, I'll sweep you to your Grave!

That tune jingles through "Mushroom Town", though in this later study of the rise and degradation of a Welsh watering place the pace is more leisurely, the handling of the story more assured. The place itself, of course, is the hero of the tragicomedy, but it is the study of the gipsy Ynis that makes the book memorable. There is a scene between Ynis and her lover that reminds you of that most exquisite of all modern love scenes, Richard and Lucy in the wood, in "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel". In this book, too, Welsh life and thought is pictured with a humor which Oliver Onions does not often allow himself to display. But the theme remains the same:

Though every prospect pleases
And only man is vile —

edging off into — "The pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!" It is this last note which is echoed in the mature, subtle, and weary afterwar study, "Peace in Our Time".

But this preoccupation with character as it reveals itself in a generation rather than in an individual, alternates with extraordinary adventures into lands of darkness. It is indeed by his genius for certain forms of the ghost story that Mr. Onions's name is best known, though some readers will maintain that his finest work is found in the novels wherein these interests are united: in such a tale, in fact, as his "Tower of Oblivion". But this vein has only lately developed. Formerly, when he turned from the novel of society, it was to occupy himself with the study of the ghost story as ghost story only. And in this vein one has to return, except for certain studies by James and Stevenson, to Poe himself before one can find a proper standard of comparison. Oliver Onions has not Poe's brevity, but imaginatively they are brothers. They are akin too in their occasional preoccupation with the mechanics as well as the spirit of crime. "In Accordance with the Evidence" and its sequels deal with the fate of a man whose life, through the commission of justifiable crime, becomes, with that of the woman who loves him but whom he does not love, "a fearful thing without trifles". Primarily the story is a wreck of souls: it is also a first class murder mystery.

It is this capacity to comprehend the abnormal which, taken a stage further, gives "Widdershins" its special place in modern literature. The collection is unique, though it is interesting to compare its intensely masculine presentment of horror with the intensely feminine "Uncanny Stories" of May Sinclair, or that delicate volume "The Baseless Fabric" recently published by Helen Simpson. Oliver Onions has published several other volumes of tales, some of them remarkable — "Gambier", for instance, in "Tales of a Far Riding", "The Woman in the Way" in "Ghosts in Daylight" — but he has never collected so perfect a series again. Instead he has given us that extraordinary experiment "The Tower of Oblivion". Oliver Onions, the satirist, presents in his opening chapter a man of forty five who is a genius. He is at the very height of his physical and mental powers — and so far the study is of a society and an individual — when, something happens! The other Oliver Onions, the

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explorer of dark lands and undiscovered countries, has interposed with a question: Suppose — ? Suppose the wheel of life, through some trick of the Invisibles, swung back instead of continuing to roll forward? Suppose, instead of aging, the man grew younger? The rest of the novel is the answer to that question.

Now such a tale is not every man's meat. It asks of the reader close attention. Give it that attention and it is as breathlessly exciting a way of using your imagination as you could want. If Oliver Onions has remained a writer's rather than a reader's novelist, it is due principally to the lack of initial effort on the reader's part. It is the reader's loss. For here is a writer who, if we disregard his uncannier gift, still remains a supersensitive recorder of the looks of the last quarter century. He has drawn its portrait in book after book, omitting neither its beauties nor its commonnesses.

Naturally the twentieth century is not quite sure if it likes it! But perhaps the real reason that Oliver Onions has no great popular appeal is that he is above all things a masculine writer, masculine in thought and masculine in expression, uncompromising, unsentimental, and with the masculine trick of seeing women as women first and as human beings afterward. Women hate that: and nine tenths of the readers of novels today are women. He has created more than one great woman: his Louie Causton is as unforgetable as his Janet in "The Tower". But his women are too often of the types that the intelligent woman reader most dislikes, the vulgarian and the cat: and women grow restless under a title like "The Spite of Heaven" with its intolerable leitmotif:

It is the spite of heaven
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
But not their appetites.

Many women readers will feel that, though the women of Oliver Onions's creation are brilliant portraits, there is something missing. But not from all. Read, if you have not those three old lamps in your possession, the new lamp he offers in exchange. If you do not know the originals you will not be irritated, you may even be aided by the rearrangement, and will close "Whom God hath Sundered" all on the Writer's side of the argument. But whether you read in the old volumes or the new, read; for this trilogy is one of the finest stories of our day. The first part tells how a man, for love's sake, murdered and was not found out: the second story tells how life looked afterward to that murderer: the third tells how the same life, incident for incident, looked to the woman who loved him, loved him so dearly that, when he died, she rose at once and followed him into the outer darkness as if she were going home. You will not fret and fidget over Oliver Onions's lesser portraits of women when you have read "The Story of Louie": even though you read it, not as a piece by itself, but alternating, chapter by chapter, with the man's point of view, as it is told in "The Debit Account". It doesn't matter, of course, for the stories are not altered, merely rearranged.

And yet — and yet — though I read and enjoyed, I confess that I wish the three books had been reprinted in one volume in their original form.

"But can't you see — ?" says the Writer.

No — this reader can't and won't. The old lamp is still the magic lamp for me.

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MY FAVORITE FICTION CHARACTER

By I. A. R. Wylie

Sketched by Dwight Taylor

IN my search for my favorite character, I have found my favorite novel. Perhaps this was an inevitable result. A novel can scarcely hold our affections by its story. Its power lies in its characters, and most positively in one character who gives to his background and companions-in-action their real significance. Thus I had not searched five minutes before I realized that somebody or other in "The Egoist" had got my heart. But as to who exactly the somebody was, I could not immediately decide. To my mind "The Egoist" is the most perfect example of pure comedy in the English language—so exquisite, so subtle, and so actual that I confess I have never yet succeeded in reading it straight through to the end. I know what the end is. But my terror lest something should have happened to the characters since my last reading—and they are so living that anything might happen to them—lest some disastrous weakening on the part of that dear "rogue in porcelain" Clara Middleton should precipitate her into the arms of that all-too-like-everybody Sir Willoughby Patterne, keeps me on such tenterhooks that I skip flagrantly until I can draw breath in the safety of the last chapter. But who makes the heart of the comedy? Whom of the many charming, aimiable characters did I love best? I thought first of Clara Middleton herself, lovely, courageous, witty, "carrying her youth like a flag". (Incidentally, Meredith is the only Victorian novelist who did not make his good women insufferable milksops, and Clara Middleton is the loveliest in his portrait gallery.) But this choice did not satisfy me. Was it perhaps Sir Willoughby himself? It is true I do not exactly love the gentleman. There are times when I frankly detest his smiling, subtle, preposterous egotism. Or, more correctly, I wince under it. The fact remains that he fascinates me devilishly. For one thing he reminds me vividly of almost everyone I know, but best of all he reminds me of myself. And since I am, like every one of us, a

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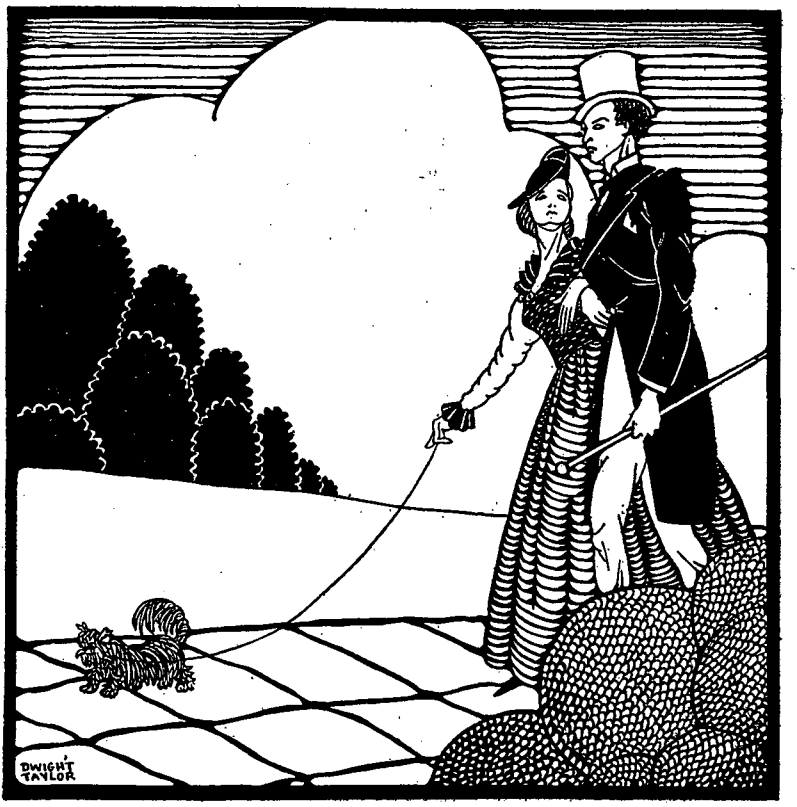

sincere and fervent egoist, nothing could interest me more permanently. It is true that through Sir Willoughby his creator pokes merciless fun at me, twirling my secret absurdities on the end of an ironic pen, but no egoist minds what anybody says about him so long as somebody says something, and in "The Egoist", *I* am constantly a matter of discussion and analysis. What reader could have a character in fiction dearer or nearer to his heart? But, having lighted on Sir Willoughby, I found that I had not quite settled the matter. Evidently there was some subtlety I had missed. Glancing through the serried pages I encountered Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson, a great friend of mine and an astute and watchful Greek chorus, and in a moment she

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had lightened my darkness. "Have you noticed", she enquired, shaking her fan at me, "have you noticed that *he has a leg?*" Let no one suppose that I am flippantly creating a personage out of a mere limb. I refer the reader to Chapter II of the comedy. Out of a delicious passage I extract these morsels:

" . . . a burning leg . . . a leg that smiles, that winks, is obsequious to you, yet perforce of beauty self-satisfied; that twinkles to a tender midway between imperiousness and seductiveness, audacity and discretion; between 'you shall worship me' and 'I am devoted to you': is your Lord, your Slave, alternately and in one . . . a leg of ebb and flow to high-tide ripples . . . without naughtiness . . . a lute to scatter songs to his mistress; a rapier, is she obdurate. In sooth a leg with brains in it, a soul."

And there, at last, I have it. The leg not only shines through degenerate modern dress. It shines through the whole book. It is the complete expression of Sir Willoughby himself. To the last exquisite scene where it bends in supplication to the exhausted and disillusioned Laetitia it is the chief personage and I do it no more than belated justice when I crown it, amid the subdued chuckles of the Olympians, my favorite character in fiction.

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MY FAVORITE FICTION CHARACTER

By Theodore Dreiser

Sketched by Dwight Taylor

"A character as close to my heart as any—*perhaps closer than any*—is Raskolnikov in 'Crime and Punishment'."

Mr. Dreiser, too tired to write more, probably finds a kinship between his own tortured characters and Raskolnikov, the intellectual criminal, poor, introspective, eventually betrayed by his own brilliant mind. Raskolnikov, whose mental labyrinth has been accepted as a masterpiece in criminal psychology.

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THE SUN IN SPLENDOUR

By Thomas Burke

PART V

The instalments of Mr. Burke's atmospheric novel which have been appearing in THE BOOKMAN *have necessarily been greatly shortened to meet space requirements; but it has been the attempt of the editors to retain as much as is possible of the quality of this unusual and distinctive piece of highly organized prose.*

THAT afternoon, when tea was done, Christopher took his cap and went out into the luminous dusk for more loafing. Eric had disappeared in one of his grouching moods; Father was keeping the bar; and Mother and Lois were engaged with occult matters in the kitchen. From the sleepy lights of the High Street he turned into Upper Street — a ravine of glittering windows and gleaming trams and buses. Above it the craggy peaks of the buildings were soothed by the darkening sky, and those shops that were frugal of their lights made mauve shadows among the exuberance of yellow. His mind was blank, and his feet moved without purpose. Hands and mouth were demonstrably busy with an orange, and thus engaged he sauntered past Collins's Music Hall, across the Green, past the Myddleton statue, and across to the Empire.

It was London's most expressive hour. The figure of the plowman homeward plodding his weary way has become associated in the popular mind as the perfect symbol of evening, as so many of man's activities on the land have become accepted as symbols of human institutions and festivals. But Christopher had never seen a plowman. He was pure London, and to his mind the spirit of recreation after toil was expressed in terms of modern social phenomena. It was expressed by half past five at the "Angel", when companies of workers from factory and office came raying out to homes beyond the noise. Complex and weary minds seek simplicity in the common forms of expression of the past — in maypoles and wassailings and morris dances; the simple mind finds simplicity in the things of its own day that serve that day's purpose. The motor bus is neither more nor less beautiful than the coach; the fox trot band neither more nor less vulgar than the minstrels in the gallery; the tram conductor in his working clothes neither more nor less picturesque than the hind of the farm. Each is of its own time, and for its own times, wearing the clothes and the appointments fitting to its purpose, and effective only when employed upon that purpose. So this vast evening procession, through crashing traffic, from toil to recreation, is a feature entirely of these days; and, though different in form, was as moving to Christopher, in its figure of human endeavor and festival, as the vision of the solitary plowman against the sunset. It is London's ebb tide, when the human waves recede from the bays and inlets of the City into the ocean of

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the suburbs, and it presents a spectacle unknown at any other time. One is in the presence of a terrible and beautiful thing: a crowd of millions of immortal souls throbbing to one impulse. Curious people take long journeys to see strange things in strange lands, when London every evening affords an event as full of passion and wonder as any Eastern occasion.

For an hour Christopher hung about this corner, staring, and trying to discover for himself what he felt about it. But he could get no further than a consciousness of being stirred by it. He was born to be solitary, and, like most solitaries, he loved the lights and the noise and the crowd; the surging rhythm of it and its mighty chords. And there was a spell in it; some misty emanation that wrought upon him those moments of vision into secret things that others know on hill tops or in forlorn valleys at midnight. The potent spell without which art cannot be.

He moved slowly through the metallic noise and the teasing odors of toast and grill and gravy, toward the City Road; and stopped suddenly outside Porter's Chop House. Through the oblongs of lemon and gold that gushed across the pavement went pale questing faces and hasting figures, and motionless among them, face thrust forward to the Chop House window, stood the long black figure of Mrs. Greenspan. Connie, looking at nothing, was at her side.

Connie at thirteen was markedly different from the open mouthed little thing that had crept to the door of "The Sun in Splendour"; and for some moments Christopher stood and watched her. She was still suffering under the rule of her aunt; her ginger curls were cut short, proving that Mrs. Greenspan was not doing well; but she was no longer the shrinking waif. The mignon figure held dignity. The face was reposed and serious. The eyes that had looked upon the horror of Mrs. Greenspan, looked upon the world as though the world held no secrets from them. Two years back she had been a baby in socks; she was now a London girl of thirteen; and Christopher saw for the first time her grace and wisdom and gravity, and was shocked into diffidence. During those two years he had been so often with her that he had never seen her. Tonight, isolated under the lamp, and unaware of inspection, she was revealed; and as he watched her he had an ache to keep looking at her, and a mortifying knowledge that he could never again treat her with patronage or pity.

As he moved into the light she saw him and nodded. He came nearer, but slowly, because of Mrs. Greenspan. They spoke a greeting.

"'Lo."

"'Lo."

"We're having something new on Wednesday — two things we ain't tried before. You coming?"

Mrs. Greenspan, turning sadly away from the bazaar of chops and steaks and sirloins, caught them. "Eh? Eh? Who's having what?"

Christopher looked up at her. "I said we was playing something new. At our place. I was asking if she was coming." He spoke boldly, but under her frosty gaze he lost his confident boyhood, and felt white and small. A faint quaver came into his voice. He was not afraid of anything she might do to him, but he was afraid of *her*. He could not properly defy her as he could have defied a street lout twice his size. She could no nothing to him; yet he was afraid of her, feeling that he was in the presence of some-

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thing he didn't understand; something he ought not, for his soul's peace, to understand.

"If she's coming, eh? M-m-m-m. That depends if I let her. I've let her lots of times, ain't I, my love? Still, I think she can come. . . . 'Course, she'll have to pay for it. No rose without a slip. Can't expect to get into concerts without paying for admission — eh?" Her eyes went into reverie. "She knows I don't like her going, but she will keep on going. So . . . she'll have to pay for it. Eh, Connie, my duck?"

She made a thin pillar of black between them, and her words threw a shadow of shame upon the grace of young boy and girl. This veiled horror, coming upon Christopher's sudden perception of the growing up of his friend, turned him sick. Mrs. Greenspan grinned. She knew that both knew what she spoke of, and she turned to each burning face, grinning at the outrage.

"You — you — you're an old beast!"

She held her grin. Connie drew back into the shadow. "Tzeee! Am I, dearie? Eh, there now. Nice little boy, you are, but I can see what you want. Nice boys want putting in their places. If you was my boy . . . M-m-m-m. I'd like to 'ave the managing of you for a week, my dear. 'Myes, I would. Eh? I'd give you a tonic or two. I'd teach you to be respectful."

He had a burst of battle. "Would you? Like to see you try it on. Dirty old beast! You wait. You won't have Connie much longer."

"Won't I, dearie? Reelly? Won't I? Eh, you'd all like to get 'old of 'er, wouldn't you? Eh, you're all trying to get 'er away from me. *I* know. I know all about it. Your precious father and a few others. But you won't, duckie. You won't. She's *mine*. See?"

Christopher stared and wondered how she knew. Since Connie's first visit to "The Sun in Splendour", when she had told them of her life with her aunt, his mother had made suggestions, and his father had listened to them, and there had been tentative inquiries, semi official, among various authorities, and the inquiries were still moving. She saw his look and leered. "A-a-ah, little boy, you're not quite smart enough for me. None of you. See?"

"We *will* get her away though. My Dad's spoken to the Sergeant here, and he's spoken to the Cruelty people. Somebody'll be coming to see you 'fore long. You wait."

"Reelly, now? Then that settles it. Connie won't be coming round Wednesday. 'Cos she may not be here. See? And since you been so bad-mannered tonight I'll show 'er what I think of bad manners. See? Come here!" She grabbed Connie by the wrist. Her eyes fed on her. "Know what I'm going to do to 'er when I get 'er 'ome? Eh?" She bent down to his ear. "I'm going to —"

He cried at her, "Shut up! Shut up! Let 'er go! Stop it, you old beast!"

"Come here!" She grabbed at him. "I'm going to take 'er —"

"Stop it! Dirty old beast!" Connie's face was white with shame; Christopher's crimson with disgust and rage. Connie cried in misery, "Go away! Go away, Chris!" With a sudden wrench he broke away and ran.

Mrs. Scollard and Lois were laying the supper in the downstairs parlor of the "Sun". From the bar came the usual cacophony of glass and beer engine and coins and chatter. Upstairs raging hands were beating upon Mrs. Greenspan through the medium

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of the piano and the fourteenth "Hungarian Rhapsody". David came in from the saloon bar, bringing with him a blare of noise which died as he closed the door. His wife looked up brightly. "Where d'you think Chris is going to play Thursday?"

"Eh? Oh, Queen's Hall, I suppose."

"Don't be silly. Somebody's engaged him to play?"

"Who? Landon Ronald?"

"Fathead. No, but somebody he met at his lesson. A friend of Mr. What's-his-name. He played to her there."

"Oh. I understand now. That makes it clear."

She flipped his neck as she passed his chair. "Well, from what he says Mr. de Florent says it might lead to a lot of things. You needn't be funny because the boy's got an invitation. It's Kensington somewhere. I fancy from what he says that she Takes People Up."

"Oh? Ah. I've heard of that sort before. And then the engine stops, and—"

"Be quiet. It might mean quite a lot for him. You never know. Anyway, he can go, I suppose?"

"Oh, he can go all right if he wants to. He's not fit to play anywhere yet, though. Wants another three years at it."

"Well, perhaps this lady might take him up and arrange that for him. Can't do anything anywhere without some influence behind you. Or money."

"I know. I know. Well, we'll see what happens."

At this remark Lois gave a long high laugh. Mrs. Scollard looked at her. "Lois!" She was subdued. They sat to supper. The noise in the bar rose. They discussed the Thursday afternoon affair. Lois laughed. Christopher ate stolidly and stared through the window of bottle glass whose formation caused every cart and every figure seen through it to take a sudden ride on a switchback. Eric sat hunched and silent, with an expression of foreboding; so withdrawn from them that he might have been in Birmingham.

That night, Mrs. Scollard, having debated the affair with bright anticipations, felt a sudden twinge of dismay. At first she had made a sanguine leap and had seen it as the beginning of Christopher's Getting On. This Getting On had always presented itself to her mind as a procession, with herself as dowager. Now, at the first active hint of it, came the thought — would she be in it? Would his Getting On mean an enriching of her life or a devastation? She knew the answer. She had always vaguely recognized that at some time she would have to lose him. If he were going to Get On he would have to live away from them. He couldn't be expected to stay in a place like the "Sun", or to bring there some of the people he would get to know. He'd be going out to smart places and meeting serious people and All That. A son, she knew, wasn't like a daughter. As he grew up he would become more and more of a stranger to her: indeed, there was already much of him of which she knew nothing. She had cruised and cruised around him, but never could she get inland. Men were men. That was a fact she had always known, and now the application of it was making her miserable. She told herself that she had always foreseen it. She told herself that it was perfectly natural that he should break away. You couldn't, she told herself, expect him to . . .

But somehow herself was no longer a calm and sensible creature. Herself was a block of marble chiseled with

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words: "You're going to lose him. He's going up and he won't be your boy much longer." And all that night, because her son had been asked to take his violin to a house in Kensington, she lay awake. Repeatedly she told herself to stop being a fool and go to sleep; but she was talking to something without ears. Toward rising time she did doze, and was awakened to a world whose purpose seemed to be the torment of mothers.

At seven o'clock a small white figure crept down the passage to the door of the front bedroom, and knocked. "Mu-u-um! Da-a-ad!"

A muffled voice answered him with, "Waaa? Woh-wan? Waa-st?"

"It's me. Chris. It's—it's—"

Then, more clearly: "Well, come in, then, and say what you got to say. What is it?"

He went in and stood before the big bed and the ruffled figures of his parents. He looked at them in their un-parent-like state with the air of one violating a sanctity. "This!"

"Well, what *is* it, boy? What *is* it?"

"I found this on Eric's bed."

"Eh? What? Found what? Don't stand there like a fool. Give it here. And go and dress yourself."

He handed up a slip of paper, and stole away. The two white stout figures scrambled up from the pillow and read it together:

"Tell them I'm fed up. I don't want Australia and I'm not going to a training ship. I'm off on my own. I'll write to you and come and see you when I feel like it but if they try to find me or put anybody on to me I won't come back at all. Eric."

Mrs. Scollard made fumbling noises. "I don't understand. What's it mean? Where's he say he's gone? Does he mean he's gone away? But why should he . . . Where could he . . . How'll he get on? . . . What'll you do about it? We can't let him . . ."

David turned the note over and turned it back and read it again. "'M. He's gone all right. He's not the fellow to do this sort of thing for a joke. He's gone all right. Question is —where? I'll speak to the Sergeant. If it's that Arthur Negretti . . .

She sat upright then. She looked at David, and though she wanted to be calm herself, she was hurt by his casual air. She meant to say something keenly expressive, but all she said was: "Oh, I say! Not really! He hasn't really run away?" That was all. For the rest of the day she said not a word about it; but her cakes wouldn't rise and she forgot to put salt in the vegetables.

On Thursday Christopher went to Mrs. Silvernight's "bijou" home in Kensington, and had his first sight of the barren land of the half intellectuals and of Nice People and of the sham grace that lures the impressionable away from beauty. During the journey to Victoria Road, by way of Wigmore Street, Park Lane, and Knightsbridge—his first taxi ride—de Florent said things. Obscure things.

"Oompish people", he said. "You know. Oompish. Sticky. Eh?"

It seemed that Christopher was expected to say something, but he had nothing to say. De Florent did not wait for him.

"Yes. Oompish. She collects 'em."

"Collects what?"

"Oomps. You'll see 'em there. Told you the other day. Any Oomp that's knocking about — she finds it. Pins it on cardboard and exhibits it." Then, with the coarseness that did not "go" with grey hair or maestri: "She's a ripsnorter, she is."

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"A ripsnorter? I thought she was very nice."

"Eh?" He seemed surprised to discover that he had company. "Oh, yes. She *is* very nice. That's the trouble. It's always the nice people that behave like stinkers. But you'll see."

"Is it a big house?" This was put casually, but there was a note of nervousness in the voice.

"Not big enough for the gang she has there. Hardly big enough for her when she's in full stroke."

"I mean I never been to a big house before. Not in Kensington. I was wondering . . ."

"Oh. See what you mean. I know. Had it myself at your age. We all do. Those who're not born in the big house air. Nothing to worry about, though. All you got to do is to play. And you needn't give a damn for any of 'em. You've got as much as any of that herd."

"But I mean — I was thinking — you see — I — she was laughing at my belonging to a public house. And I don't suppose any of them there — I mean, I expect they're all people who —"

De Florent spoke one syllable — a street corner syllable expressing objection, disbelief, scorn and impatience. "What's that got to do with it? You're doing something — or will soon. They do nothing. They dabble. They piddle about with art. Talk about it. Read about it. But they can't even paint an Academy picture or compose a "Garden of Roses" or write a shopgirl novel. Let alone do the Real stuff. They're undergraduates. And will be all their lives. Prattlers. Piddlers. They know all the jargon. And that's about all. The half artists — exposing their dirty little minds to the world. When they do do anything, it smells. Think they're presenting their vision when they're only chalking things on walls, like nasty old men. May not be any of that breed there today. But you'll see."

He saw. Mrs. Silvernight breasted a wave of guests to greet them, made a way for them into her double drawing room, and forgot them. Despite de Florent's comments, he was impressed and crushed by it. This was like nothing that he had seen before. It was magnificently above de Florent's music room. There were great pictures, great rugs, great divans, two great fireplaces, and the greatness of Mrs. Silvernight. It was for him the expression of splendid living, and it awed him.

Young men and middle aged men and young girls and middle aged women stood or sat about the room. Long hair and short hair was affected without regard to sex. Old and young smoked cigarettes and threw their ash where they would. When Mrs. Silvernight approached a group, the group assumed an air of intense enjoyment. When she had passed the faces fell back to nature. De Florent was claimed by a tall man with a thin yellow beard, who took him away with lofty waves of the hand. Christopher was left by the door. He took a position behind it, and wished he had not come. Among these serious adults, some well dressed, some ill dressed, but all *looking* distinguished, and taking tea from servants as though the servants were not there, he saw himself as the half grown Lout. The dowdiest people here had an air that lifted them far above the most prosperous people of Islington High Street; and he felt that he ought to be downstairs. But he was there, and he must carry the situation. He tried to do this and to hold as easy an attitude as the people about him.

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He leaned against the wall, folded his arms over his chest, and crossed one leg over the other; and immediately felt that the pose was ridiculous. He put his arms behind him and clasped his hands; and felt awkward. He let them hang straight from the shoulder, and stood upright; and felt conspicuous. He put both hands in his trousers pockets; and remembered that that was Bad Manners. He put his hands in his coat pockets, and took them out again. There was then but one thing to do with his arms — the one thing he wanted to do — wave them in the air. Be expressive. But he could no more be expressive in this room than swear aloud in church. A maid saved him by asking if he was taking tea. He said, "Thank you, miss." She handed him tea, severely, and another maid presented a cake stand of three tiers. He saw cake on the top tier and fumbled with it. The cake had been badly cut. The maid held the stand limply and with resignation. He made attacks on three separate slices, and at last gave them up, took a more yielding portion, and broke away with half a continent of cake: the unsliced half. The maid looked at him, and with the brutality of girlhood, left him with it. He began to eat cake, and saw himself eating cake for the next half hour. Hot eyes over the tableland of cake saw that two or three people had seen and were smiling. He heard a voice asking, "Who's the scrubby little chap against the wall?" He cursed them. To ease the strain he began to think about Eric. He did not know where Eric was, or what he was doing, but he wished he were with him. He had a sudden desire to tell these people about Eric and about "The Sun in Splendour"; to shock them; and a firm desire to be rid of that cake and out of that house.

In the thick of a mouthful Mrs. Silvernight passed him and tossed a few disheveled sentences at him: "Hullo. . . . There you are. . . . Been looking everywhere. . . . Wondering what . . . Send someone talk to you. . . . Don't go away. . . . Expecting lovely music. . . ." At the threat of sending someone to talk to him, he mumbled desperately at the cake, but before he was halfway through it she was back; and with her came a new disturbance. A vision of blue and white and black. A softly breathing vision. Something rarer than he had yet known. The essential Girl of schoolboys' dreams. Silk frock, touched with blue ribbon. Blue eyes. Bright red lips. Black bobbed hair. Soft white neck. Roses in the cheeks. Slim legs in brown silk stockings. The Lewis Baumer flapper. Forgetting all de Florent's warnings, he saw it as a sudden descent of beauty into his path, and surrendered to it. She was smiling at him, brightly, and he heard only distantly Mrs. Silvernight's voice. "Oh, Pam, come here and talk to him. My daughter — Pamela. Boy I told you about, Pam. Look after him. Hold him down. Looks as though he wanted to run away. Quaint boy!"

They were left together behind the door. She began to talk, and as he tried to listen he had a desperate feeling of being held down by cake and cup and saucer, and battered by smiles and blue eyes and a throat so white and girlish that it seemed an indecency to look upon it. She talked with the jolly candor of tennisy sixteen, and through his confusion he heard sometimes her and sometimes the chatter from the chairs and lounges about them, and said "Yes" and "No" at random. People came and went.

Some came lightly, shaking hands

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casually with Mrs. Silvernight, and passing from her to their friends as though the house were a public rendezvous: which it was. Some, making their first visit, and prepared by rumors that had reached them, entered with an air of despondency and alarm. There was continual circling, with Mrs. Silvernight as M. C., and continual talk. He had always regarded the talk at "The Sun in Splendour" tea parties as the talk belonging to his class only, and thought that well to do people in drawing rooms had a talk of their own, tinct with learning and of full bouquet. He found now that Still Alarms and Buff Orpingtons lived everywhere, marked from those he knew by the slight difference of aspirates and pleasing inflections. A sweet clear voice came through the babble. "Mumsie told me about you and your playing. Hope we're going to hear you. She said you're wonderful. You're fond of music, aren't you?" This was precisely the penetrating question that Aunt Julie would have asked a musician, and he had a moment's thought of "What a fool!" But the blue eyes and the bright lips gave life to the question, and there was a look of admiration with it that made him hurry to answer, "Oo, rather. I am. Music's — " only to discover that he had nothing to say about music. After a few moments she moved away, leaving him with the certainty that he had made a bad impression or no impression at all. Listening to the babble, he heard something that bore solemnity and richness, and gave it his attention.

"Exactly", a voice was saying. "Exactly. But you see, the essence of the short story . . . Tchekhov . . ."

"Ah, Tchekhov . . ."

"Yes, of course . . . Tchekhov . . ."

"Quite."

Two girls and two men leaned back in their chairs with the air of having said something about Tchekhov. From another point a word was caught. "Puccini." They all laughed. "Oh, Puccini!" Oh, Lord!" They had discussed Puccini. Somebody said, "The German fellow — Wedekind, you know."

"Ah, Wedekind. Now there's a case that presents what I was saying. A lot of people don't understand Wedekind. They can't see his Urge, his Significance."

A voice like a trundled cannon ball came from the back. "Well, what's it matter anyway? Why the hell should they? Eh?" Heads were turned to see who had said it, and somebody covered it with, "Oh, well, if one can't, one can't. I don't know. . . . After all, Wedekind's there. There's the Message. He prepared the way for Toller. Decidedly he matters. If one had said Michael Arlen, now . . ." There was laughter. The laugh was cut through by the cannon ball. "They're all alike. All the lot of 'em. Intelligent people don't write plays. Least, not for the theatre. . . . Punch and Judy shows — that's all the theatre is. Silly faces. Silly figures. Silly voices getting between the author and the public."

They looked a little uncomfortable. Somebody had said something, had expressed a definite opinion, and had profaned the charming mistiness. Hastily they enclosed themselves again, and small talk dripped about the room like November rain.

He heard the use of the word "these" as a term of disapproval. They spoke of *these* Tories, *these* reactionaries, *these* jazz bands, *these* films, *these* Robots. Mrs. Silvernight's voice came through it. "Clever boy. Comes from the people, you

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know. Father keeps a public house somewhere in King's Cross, and plays the cello. So interesting, I think. I mean — it makes it so different, doesn't it? I mean — "

He became aware that de Florent was at his side, and was looking at him. "Well? What d'you think of this lot of Oomps?"

"I — I don't know. Who's that over there — the man with the spats?"

"That — seen him before, haven't you? Jimmy Magson. Jimmy Magson's band. Calls himself a conductor. Might do very well on a pirate bus."

"And who's that over there — the man with the cropped hair and side whiskers?"

"Him? Oh, poor imitation of the Frenchmen — Erik Satie and that lot."

It was a relief to have someone to talk to. "What's he dress like that for?"

"Oh — goes with the prison crop, I suppose. Putting himself up for identification."

Mrs. Silvernight swam to them. "Now, boy — I've forgotten his name — oh, yes, Christopher — now, Christopher, you're going to play to us, aren't you? Come along." De Florent shrugged his shoulders and followed her and Christopher to the piano. His face expressed, "What on earth am I doing in this crowd?" Many other faces expressed the same question, and when they saw the scrubby boy unpack a violin, they expressed it more clearly. They looked at each other, telegraphing: "Oh, Lord. Another of Margaret's working class geese!"

At the first chords of the piano, there was a momentary hush; then the talk continued though in subdued tones. De Florent nodded to him and muttered something, and began one of Sarasate's Spanish dances. A few people turned heads to look at him; then looked away. As his nervousness passed, he tried to look round the room for beauty's face and if possible to catch her eye and play to *her*. This was his chance to assert himself and to claim her regard, to say, in effect: "I know I'm nobody. I know I look a fool, and you think I'm a fool. But I'll show you. I want you to know that I'm not." It seemed most important that she should know as soon as possible that he wasn't entirely scrubby and commonplace. But she wasn't there. When the Spanish dance was finished those nearest the piano nodded and smiled; the others didn't know it was finished. Mrs. Silvernight called, "Go on. Go on. Splendid!" as though she were encouraging an athlete. He played, on de Florent's orders, a Paganini Caprice to equal attention and effect, and was again urged to Go on. De Florent turned to him and gave his platform smile, and said, "Wings of Song". While he was doing this, Mrs. Silvernight lay back with closed eyes, and when he was done, said dreamily; "Mendelssohn . . . I always think there's something about Mendelssohn. I mean — he seems to have a something . . ."

In the uprush of talk de Florent drifted from the piano, and Christopher was left alone. He tried to follow him. As he passed behind chairs, one or two people gave him half an eye, and an elderly woman said that she thought he was wonderful for his age, and hoped he would play again. Nothing else was said, and de Florent had reached the far end of the room beyond pursuit. He fumbled, and took his old position by the door. It was half open and through it he could see into the hall. Among a pile of hats and coats on a centre table he saw his cap. Beyond the table he saw the street door. He looked about the

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room and at the scattered groups of people bent toward each other. He saw his chance. Hitching his case under his arm he streaked through the door, reached for his cap as though he were stealing it, opened the hall door, and was away.

In Kensington Road he found a bus — he had been provided with a shilling for the occasion — and mounted it as though expectant of arrest. He reached Islington at six o'clock, wondering how he was to report upon this tepid affair which his mother had seen so hopefully. But the disaster of Eric had clouded the household, and questions were few and perfunctory, and his bright answers were hardly heard.

For this he was glad. He was in no mood for talk or for discussion of his musical achievements. He was not at all worried by the fact that the afternoon had been a washout. He had other things to think about; and that night, in the bedroom which he now had to himself, he stood for an hour at the window looking down toward the lights of St. Pancras and the Victoria Tower, and thinking. Against the violet sky he saw a wonderful girl, and against her shining presence the thought of Connie came suddenly as mean and drab and lustreless. He found himself wanting to stop knowing her, and wanting to stop right at the moment. He wanted to cleanse himself of past mean associations, and start a new and beautiful period of service to the luminous paleness and garden grace of Pamela. He wanted to change the power and beauty of the strait stony road for the luscious valley of Avilion.

He wanted to do what de Florent had found hell in doing.

SONNET TO E. W.

By Maxwell Bodenheim

NOT proud, and yet perverse, you raise a shield
Of glass, which could be broken at a stroke,
Because you know that pain is but a joke
Made for the fatal relishing concealed
Within your thoughts, and for your feelings still
Impenitent, disarmed, and subtly white.
You came late to your trysting place with fright
And found that he had lost his weary skill.

Yes, you were late, and so your smile remains,
Not cruel, never kind, and always just
Evading clowns and monsters in the stream
Of people stopping you along your lanes.
The merciless extremes of rust and lust
Will never penetrate your naked dream.

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THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY

In the First Twenty Five Years of the Twentieth Century

By Frances Newman

WHEN the first quarter of the twentieth century went down into history on the thirty first of December, the first twenty five years of the American short story's self conscious existence went down into history with it. During the nineteen hundred years of the story's comparatively naive existence — the Milesian tales and the Christian religion came into Europe at about the same time — the writing of tales was merely one part of the general practice of literature. But about the year 1900 the writing of tales became a highly specialized profession, then it became a business, and then it became a trade. There is a theory that if enough people do anything, some of them will unavoidably do it well, and it received definite confirmation from the few Americans who began to practise the writing of tales as an art not very long after several thousand Americans had begun to practise it as a trade. The theory, indeed, needs no more proof than the reading of a story called "The Other Woman" which Richard Harding Davis wrote a few years before the twentieth century began, and the immediately subsequent reading of a story called "The Other Woman" which Sherwood Anderson wrote a few years before its first quarter ended.

Richard Harding Davis wrote his stories in the innocent days when James Huneker had not yet called America's attention to the existence of Europe, and when the Spanish War and the World War had not yet called Europe's attention to the existence of America. Sigmund Freud had discovered that when men and women push their hearts' desires into the catacombs of their minds, cankering nerves and cankering souls are their reward. But very few Americans suspected that this dangerous Unconscious existed, and none of them seems to have known that it had been discovered. Anton Tchekhov was wandering over the face of Russia, and writing "The Kiss" and "The Darling" and "The Party", but Constance Garnett had not translated them into English, and no one in America seems to have known that the short story had reached a discouraging state of perfection. In spite of Oscar Wilde's conviction that reading "Mine Own People" was like sitting under a palm tree and reading life by broad flashes of vulgarity, America knew that Rudyard Kipling was proving the financial advantages of persuading journalism and literature to flow under the same bridges and down the same channel into the same sea.

A certain well bred part of America knew that a young Englishman called Richard Le Gallienne and another young Englishman called Maurice Hewlett were writing elaborate stories of love under the greenwood tree, and that a young American called Justus Miles Forman and a young Virginian called

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James Branch Cabell were beginning to write stories of love in the olden days for "The Smart Set" and for "Harper's Magazine". And all New Englanders, and the more cultured persons in the south and the west, knew that Henry James was writing stories which were apparently meant to prove that there is no difference between the best manners and the best morals, and that Mrs. Edith Wharton and Miss Katharine Fullerton were writing stories which were apparently meant to prove that there was no difference between their minds and Henry James's mind. Richard Harding Davis may not have known that Henry James believed in the identity of manners and morals, but in his little way he must have been trying to say the same thing. He must have been trying to say it when he wrote the story of the afternoon when young Van Bibber rode on a swan boat in Central Park with a little girl from a slum whose code allowed her to go swan riding with a young gentleman in need of company, but whose code did not allow her to accept a ticket from the same young gentleman — Mr. Davis suggests a conviction that Lohengrin, son of Parsifal, did not mount a swan from knightlier motives than Van Bibber's. Writers of fictions were supposed to be gentlemen in those days, and they were supposed to survey their characters from the standpoint of gentlemen — even Charles Dickens must have meant to place himself beside Lady Dedlock, not beside Sam Weller. Rudyard Kipling seems to have thought that being surveyed from the standpoint of an Englishman was all any reasonable character could ask, but H. G. Wells was certainly responsible for England's discovery that a writer can survey his characters from the social level on which he was born, or from whatever social level he may have reached when he begins to write fiction. And, from all the names that English nomenclature affords, William Sydney Porter chose the name of O. Henry — a name which would destroy the beauty and the dignity of any sentence that a Walter Pater or a Henry James or an Anatole France or a James Branch Cabell could write — and became responsible for America's discovery that an author has the right to be a bounder.

O. Henry was responsible for a proletarian literary revolution as successful as Lenin's proletarian social revolution, and he left footprints on the less important American story which are deeper than any man is likely to sink again. In the year 1842, Poe discovered that a story must have what he called a unique or single effect, as at least a hundred handbooks have recorded without revealing the difference between a unique effect and a single effect. But Anglo-Saxon writers are not so fond of split literary hairs as French and Italian writers are. They are not easily disturbed by other people's theories, and Poe's discovery does not seem to have affected Harriet Beecher Stowe and Donald Mitchell and George William Curtis — not any more than Sir Philip Sidney's defense of the dramatic unities of time, place, and action affected the hither-and-yon time, place, and action of "As You Like It" and "King Lear". And when, in 1884, Professor Brander Matthews issued a bull proclaiming that a short story is not a Short-story unless it possesses originality, unity, compression, brilliance of style, action, form, substance, and fantasy, Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins and George Egbert Craddock do not seem to have been convinced of his in-

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fallibility, since they continued to write stories which lacked precisely those qualities.

But Anglo-Saxon writers, like Latin writers, follow successful and easily imitated performance. America was provided with tropical dependencies when Kipling's star was still well above the horizon, and American writers remembered the exact financial value of every strident word that he wrote, and filled the magazines with high pitched tales about the debilitating effect hot weather has on the Nordic race. And when O. Henry read the story which Maupassant called "The Necklace", the American story was provided with a carefully charted paper pattern — a pattern which could be fitted to any theme, and which is just beginning to wear along its edges.

"The Necklace" is the only one of Maupassant's stories in which he saved the Reversal of his Situation for the last sentence, and it is therefore the only one of his stories which has the structure of the Milesian tale called "The Boy of Pergamum" and the structure that every joke has. But if Mr. Porter ever read "Madame Tellier's Establishment", he did not remember that Maupassant gave it the ample ease suited to a baptism strangely attended by half a dozen ladies of ill fame. If he read "Happiness", he did not remember that Maupassant gave it the gentle, tender slowness suited to the story of a long lifetime of happiness. He can only have remembered the easy and obvious effectiveness of a last page which revealed that Madame Loisel had lost ten years of her life and her figure and her complexion in replacing a borrowed necklace, and of a last line which revealed that the necklace was only paste.

For ten years, he pinned the pattern of "The Necklace" on pieces of his own experience and his own observation and his own imagination, and he cut out stories which always ended when a husband, who had just sacrificed his ancestral watch to buy side-combs for his wife's beautiful hair, came home to find that his wife had just sacrificed her beautiful hair to buy a fob for his ancestral watch. Most Americans know the structure of a joke, and after O. Henry had written stories like "The Gift of the Magi" and "The Third Ingredient" for three or four years, a great many of his fellow Americans began to realize that his stories were cut by a pattern. And although many Americans must know the tedium of hearing any joke a second time, and the extreme tedium of hearing it a third time, a great many of them laid the pattern down on their own experiences and their own observations, and on the old stories they found in old magazines, and they cut out stories for themselves. O. Henry had provided his less gifted fellow countrymen with a pattern whose clever and sharp and simple lines could easily be seen by men and women who could never have seen the light and graceful lines with which Thomas Bailey Aldrich led up to the astonishing endings of "Marjorie Daw" and "Mademoiselle Olympe Zabriski" and "Two Bites at a Cherry". And even those Americans whose compulsory education consisted of the ability to read and write, the knowledge that two and two are four, and the knowledge that the world is round, heard the shrill style with which his stories are sewed together, and realized that the way of telling a story may be as important as the story itself. If they supposed that telling a story the right way is a trick, instead of realizing that it is an art, and if the American short

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story became slick instead of smooth, O. Henry cannot be held responsible unless Martin Luther is to be held responsible for the Ku Klux Klan.

Instead of cutting out stories for themselves, some people found greater profit in cutting out patterns and selling them to commencing authors. When the first pattern was sold, the Handbook of Short-story Writing was born, and the next day the Course in Short-story Writing was born. The Modern Drama and the Drama League had their great day, the World War began and Rupert Brooke and Alan Seeger and Joyce Kilmer sang and died, and Modern Poetry had its great day. And when the World War ended, prose was the only medium for a disillusioned world, and the great day of the short story had dawned. Half a dozen disciples had translated Freud's books into English, and Mrs. Garnett had translated Tchekhov's stories into an English over which their high distinction managed to triumph. Katherine Mansfield had left New Zealand for London and "The Athenæum", Joseph Conrad had laid down a law that a writer can know nothing of his own characters except what he has seen them do and heard them say and what his friends have seen them do and heard them say, Sherwood Anderson and D. H. Lawrence had found the blood stream of their characters, and James Joyce had found the stream of his characters' consciousness. Joseph Hergesheimer had ended his fourteen years of apprenticeship to the art of writing prose, and James Branch Cabell was still weaving his brocades in Virginia. At a casual glance, the designs he wove into "Porcelain Cups" in 1919, and even the designs he wove into "The Thin Queen of Elfhame" three or four years later, are not very different from the designs he wove into "The Love-Letters of Falstaff" in 1902. But under the searching and hopeful scrutinies to which Mr. Cabell's tales have been subject for five years, there are little figures that were not always in the designs of his beautifully woven brocades — little figures as strange and as curiously modern and mediæval as the bits of New York which are carved in the Gothic traceries of the church dedicated to the doubting Saint Thomas on Fifth Avenue in the city of New York. Mr. Cabell and America had become somewhat cynical and somewhat sophisticated. America had become conscious of Europe and Europe had become conscious of America.

And America had become conscious of herself. The world owed her money and gratitude. Her financial position and her social position were comfortably settled, and, like a less collective lady, America began to take an interest in her lineage and in her own youth. When Duncan Phyfe tables and Sandwich glass plates came into fashion, Meade Minnigerode began to write about the fabulous Forties, Mrs. Wharton began to write about the innocent Seventies, Thomas Beer began to write about Seventies which were less polite but no less innocent, Thomas Beer and Carl Van Vechten began to write about the mauve but not quite purple Nineties, Joseph Hergesheimer began to write about nearly any decade except the Nineteen Twenties, and Anne Parrish, having read Rose Macaulay with flattering interest, gathered half a dozen decades into one novel, and surpassed all her contemporaries in writing with a self consciousness of quaintness which puts literature on the plane with pasting pages from "Godey's Lady's Book" on shades for the mellowing of electric lamps. Amer-

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ica had begun to cover her walls with portraits of her notable mother, of her own charming and innocent childhood and her own lovely and innocent girlhood, and some of her painters were devoting great care to hoops and leg of mutton sleeves and basques and chignons, and very little care to the lady who wore them.

A maturing cynicism and a maturing prosperity had begun to struggle within America. Jurgen and George Babbitt were beginning to prove the truth of Jurgen's conviction that cleverness is the most delightful thing in the world, but that cleverness is never on top. And in spite of all that, a man who read nothing except short stories was unlikely to know that the struggle had begun. If any curious person should lay down a copy of any number that one of our more dignified magazines, or one of our more popular magazines, published during all of last year, and if he should then take up, say, a copy of "Scribner's Magazine" for the month of July in the year 1900, he would begin by finding its advertisements very much out of the fashion. And if the advertisements and the month and the year had disappeared with the cover, he would still find it sufficiently dated by Richard Harding Davis's article on "The Relief of Ladysmith" and by Thomas Millard's article on "The Boer as a Soldier". He would also feel the quarter of a century when he noticed that Senator George Hoar's reminiscences were just reaching his years at Harvard, that James M. Barrie was not yet a baronet, and that his "Tommy and Grizel" was just reaching the moment of Elspeth's betrothal. But when he turned to a story written by Charles Warren and called "The Colligo Club Theatricals", he would realize that he could hardly have found it out of place in any one of the magazines he had just laid down — even though political stories like "The Colligo Club Theatricals", and like the story Mr. Warren called "A Copley Boy" and the story William Allen White called "A Victory for the People", are not so fashionable as they were in the days of Lincoln Steffens and the shame of the cities, and of Ida Tarbell and the Standard Oil Company.

If any definite story, published in any dignified American magazine during the first five years of this century, is compared with any story of the same definite type published in the same type of magazine during the five years just past, the smallness of their inherent difference is more astonishing than any ending O. Henry ever conceived. When his admiring editors began to provide his more extreme colloquialisms with explanatory footnotes, they admitted that his style is becoming somewhat antiquated for the current generation, however unconscious a quaintness he may take on a hundred years from this year. And the stories which are still cut by his pattern are usually printed in magazines more concerned with good plots than with enduring paper. The stories of those authors who know that Freud and Tchekhov have crossed the ocean, and who try to see below the surfaces of their characters and to find for every theme the precise form that it requires, are usually printed in magazines which have come into existence for the purpose of printing them, just as the independent salons and galleries came into existence for the purpose of hanging canvases that no academic jury would hang even in its sky line. Until "The Dial" moved to New York and went modern, "The Little Review" printed the stories in which Sherwood Anderson showed that an American genius, like a Russian genius, cuts a

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new pattern for every story he writes, and that the theme and the form and the style of a good story are indistinguishable. "The Dial" also began to print the grave and delicately touched stories of Manuel Komroff — stories like "Rehearsal", which seem to differ from Sherwood Anderson's stories by a greater ease, and also by showing the influence of the Russians instead of showing the same instinctive literary theories. "The Dial" began to print, too, stories written by Glenway Wescott, stories like "In a Thicket", which are finely felt and which go far below the surface of their characters but not down into their very blood — as Mr. Anderson does in "Unused" and "The New Englander" and "The Other Woman" — and which are written in an unfinished prose that shows no desire to equal the tenderness and kindness Mr. Anderson shows for every word he takes up.

And then "The Century Magazine" went modern — modern in the degree of a literary republic, not of a literary soviet republic — and printed stories written by Mr. Anderson and stories written by Ruth Suckow — stories like "Renters", which are finely and no doubt truly felt, even though they do not see as far below their characters' surfaces as Mr. Wescott's stories do, and even though they are written in a prose which makes their consideration as literature impossible. And then "The American Mercury" issued its epoch making and rare and valuable first number, and stories like Sherwood Anderson's and like Ruth Suckow's "Four Generations" and like Daniel Merrill Anderson's "Play a Waltz" have been the only stories it has printed. Last September, "Harper's Magazine" went modern — modern in the degree of a very constitutional literary monarchy, and to the extent of printing a paper on American men written by Rebecca West, some verses written by Edna St. Vincent Millay, a new department written by Dr. Fosdick, and an extremely good story written by Aldous Huxley. Only its American story, written by Harold Brecht and called "Two Heroes", would have failed to astonish William Dean Howells by what its author knew and thought or by what his characters knew and felt.

In "Harper's Magazine" for last July, there is a story called "Amateur" which won a prize for Phœbe Gilkyson — the story of an unimportant girl who married into the Pennsylvania country house in which an hereditary family had been settled long enough to consider itself an extremely aristocratic family. William Dean Howells would not have been disturbed by its technique, its psychology, or its conviction that in the long run the lowly are more truly virtuous and important than the highly placed. In the number that the same magazine published in January, 1925, there is a story written by Arthur Johnson and called "Mrs. Eben Paul" — the story of a New England selectman's widow who left her deferential village for isolated life in an American plan hotel in Boston. William Dean Howells and Mary Wilkins might have thought that the New England stuff which made Silas Lapham and Jane Field was weakening, but Mr. Johnson's vocabulary and his technique and his theme would not have given them any reason to suspect that Tchekhov had crossed the Atlantic, and his psychology would not have given them any reason to suspect that Freud had crossed the Austrian border. "Mrs. Eben Paul" and "Amateur" would have been entirely congruous in the same magazine with the polite story

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called "Mrs. Dud's Sister", all mayonnaise and crisp white duck skirts, which Josephine Daskam Bacon wrote for the number that "Harper's" issued in January of the year 1902.

The story called "Lijah", which Edgar Valentine Smith wrote in Mississippi in 1924 and which received the endorsement of the O. Henry Memorial Committee, is one of those stories of a completely hospitable and completely well bred and completely impoverished southern planter which magazines have been printing ever since southern planters added poverty to good manners. It is another of those stories which are like the stories of Thomas Nelson Page and the stories of Hopkinson Smith in the same way that the last line in a copybook is like the first line in a copybook. The stories which show that hot weather has a debilitating effect on the morals of the Nordic race have changed even less since "Without Benefit of Clergy" became a model for the world. "Tropical Heat and White Men", which Isa Urquhart Glenn wrote in 1924, and "Shoes", which Frances Gilchrist Wood wrote two or three years before, might have been printed in any American magazine in any year since America acquired her tropical possessions. And the stories concerned with the Americanizing of little aliens which Elinore Cowan Stone began to write a year or two ago — stories like "One Uses the Handkerchief" — differ from Myra Kelly's "Little Citizens" only in a New Mexican instead of a New York scene, and resemble them even to the well remembered and perhaps unchanging, "Teacher, yes ma'am."

The typical love story of the past five years is undoubtedly the Scott Fitzgerald love story, and the scenery and the wardrobe of the story he called "The Off-Shore Pirates" are certainly unlike the scenery and the wardrobe of the story Jesse Lynch Williams wrote for "Scribner's Magazine" in 1899. Mr. Williams's heroine was called nothing more exotic than Ruth Richardson, and she wore nothing more exotic than pink lawn. There was a "quiet dignity and a reserve about her, and a little humorous curve at the corners of her mouth". For purposes of courtship, a young gentleman called Tom Potter assumed a monocle, a small English mustache, and a small English title, and between his two personalities he won his dignified, reserved, and humorous lady. Mr. Fitzgerald's heroine was called Ardita, and there was no dignity and no reserve about her, and her sense of humor was no greater than her creator's. Ardita sucked lemons and read "The Revolt of the Angels" — which, Mr. Fitzgerald considerately stopped to explain, was written by Anatole France — and every time her unfortunate uncle spoke to her she said, "Shut up." Nevertheless, she also was wooed and won by the prosperous young gentleman her uncle had chosen for her — after the young gentleman had assumed the disguise of a pirate captain in command of a jazz orchestra of pirates. Between those two stories, there is a generation which has decided that amusement is better food for a lifetime than pride. But there are half a dozen generations between Scott Fitzgerald and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and nevertheless the plot of "The Off-Shore Pirates" is precisely the plot of "The Rivals", and those admirers of Mr. Fitzgerald's who believe that he invented bad tempered and bad mannered and literary and nevertheless irresistible heroines would learn with astonishment that Ardita's manners are no worse than Lydia Languish's manners,

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that she speaks to her uncle no more rudely than Lydia Languish spoke to her celebrated aunt, and that her fondness for books is not more pronounced.

But, since Lydia and Ardita are both heroines as conventionalized as the capital on a Greek column, they can hardly be expected to show the changes that have been observed by writers more recent than Mr. Sheridan and more penetrating than Mr. Fitzgerald. Stories about women did not often consider that women had a point of view until the eighteenth century; and so far as I know, the first real women in a modern short story are the women whom Prosper Mérimée and Alfred de Musset painted in the days of the last Bourbon and of the third Napoleon. Madame de Coursey, who is the heroine of the story Mérimée called "The Etruscan Vase", is probably the first heroine whose beauty is suggested by a word or two of reported conversation, whose elegance is suggested by a word or two about her slippers and her stockings and her coiffure, and whose tenderness and cleverness and gaiety are shown in two or three words of her own conversation. Henry James's Julia Bride had all of those qualities except gaiety, with a very different and very Anglo-Saxon way of feeling that there is no difference between the best morals and the best manners. The Florentine heroine of the lovely story Joseph Hergesheimer called "The Flower of Spain" had all of those qualities, with a very Italian sense of love and of morality; and Marianna, heroine of the story that is the third part of "The Three Black Pennys", is as fine and as finely painted as Madame de Coursey.

But no man knew the women of the nineteenth century as Jane Austen knew them, and no man knows the women of the twentieth century as Katherine Mansfield knew them, and the women who live in America in the twentieth century will not be painted until some American woman feels what Katherine Mansfield felt about English women, and feels it clearly enough to write stories as crystal as "Bliss" and "The Garden Party". Most women, apparently, must follow a master, but the second woman who will have a place in the history of the short story will not be an American woman unless she follow a master as Katherine Mansfield followed Tchekhov, instead of following him as Edith Wharton followed Henry James, and unless an American woman has already been born with the fineness of Mrs. Wharton, the sympathetic penetration of Ruth Suckow, with the gentle incredulity of Jane Austen, and the realization that, in spite of all those gifts, she must learn the difficult art of writing prose. Perhaps, indeed, such a woman may already have been born, and the necessities of authors and the imperfection of the great public's taste may have forced her to the state of Charles Brackett — Charles Brackett, who wrote a brilliant, sophisticated, and amusing novel called "Week-End" and who, it appears, is the same Charles Brackett who wrote the time and type worn story called "Father's Day" which was part of the number with which "The Saturday Evening Post" celebrated the one hundred and forty ninth anniversary of the independence of the United States.

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THE LONDONER

G. H. Mair—An Extraordinary Story—Colonel House and the Literary Agent—Authors in the Sunshine; with Details of Their Forthcoming Works—The Tauchnitz Editions

LONDON, *March* 1, 1926.

THE death of G. H. Mair removes from London one of its most brilliant journalists. Mair was an extraordinary personality, and if his temperament had only allowed a more marked degree of persistency there would have been no end to his power in Fleet Street and the world of the English press. He was only thirty nine at the moment of his death, and his precocity must have been prodigious. His earliest journalism was in connection with the "Manchester Guardian" — a fact which in itself will convey to non-English readers some indication of his brilliance. It is said that he approached C. P. Scott direct from Oxford, after taking his degree there, and suggested (in his ignorance) that he should immediately become a subeditor on the "M. G." Mr. Scott, amused at this suggestion, replied that as a prelude Mair perhaps might begin by writing leading articles for the paper. Accordingly, he joined the staff. Later he became London editor, and it was in this responsible and picturesque position (in which I think he succeeded J. B. Atkins, the present editor of the "Spectator", and was followed by James Bone) that Mair really began that amazing social experience which caused him to know everybody in London — and almost, it seemed at times, everybody in the world. To be in his company at a theatrical first night (as I have several times been) was to be brought inevitably into personal contact with fully half of those composing the distinguished audience. He could not move from his seat in the stalls without having to stop all the way along the row for greetings. For a long time he acted as a sort of honorary dramatic critic to "Truth", and latterly went to the more important first nights for the "Evening Standard". He seemed to know all the actors, producers, and dramatists. And this was but one phase of his activity. When very young he wrote for the Home University Library a manual of "Modern English Literature", which showed wide reading and considerable taste; and he later revised his book and brought out an expanded version. As far as I know this was his only book. But when the war broke out Mair was joined with C. F. G. Masterman in the work of creating what must have been the embryo of the Ministry of Information. I forget the name of this department, but fancy that it had something to do with propaganda. Its offices were somewhere in Victoria Street, and I think this work (which brought him into contact with all the political leaders and all those others who were "winning the war") must have been stupendously exciting and amusing to Mair. He loved having all his fingers at work in different pies, and adored (as we all do) the sense of being busily engaged in making appointments, arrangements, promises, contracts, and all manner of other enchanting social and political mud pies. This was a

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glorious time for him, and I can remember that when a Front Bench minister was making a rather evasive reply in the House of Commons, pretending that he did not know who was responsible for certain activities, he was interrupted with almost universal cries of "Mair! Mair!" This was fame indeed! Subsequently Mair had the handling of the press at the Peace Conference, and himself prepared the historic précis of the Treaty. That done, he returned to England, had some further connection with the "Daily Chronicle", and remained a great journalistic power behind the scenes. His immense experience, so quickly gathered, made him an almost perfect touchstone regarding contemporary personalities, and the paragraphs he wrote irregularly for the "Evening Standard" were often of the greatest interest, and full of information. Those paragraphs, like his later dramatic criticism, were often very caustic, a characteristic which may have been due to his unceasing ill health; but at all times they showed first hand observation, and there can be no doubt of the vitality of his comments. He was a very good journalist indeed, and for this work is not to be replaced.

Coming now to his personality, I should say that it was adversely affected by his passion for a sort of social omnivorousness. He was no snob. I must not be misunderstood in that respect. He merely loved the thrill of many contacts. He could not rest, but must always be doing something new, meeting new people, staging new scenes, founding new enterprises. What enterprises he may actually have embarked upon, other than those which are public knowledge, I do not know; but I do know that others were constantly simmering in his active mind. And, since he was such a social figure, and was extremely charming, he was beyond all control in the matter of time, place, and circumstance. My own experience of him will be recognizable by all who had the pleasure of Mair's acquaintance. We met — not for the first time — at a house in the country where we were both spending the weekend. During that weekend we had much conversation, and quite definitely "took" to one another. We traveled up to town together on the Monday morning. "Look here," said Mair, as we parted, "why shouldn't we lunch one day? What about Thursday, at my club?" I accepted the invitation. Later, I mentioned it to a common friend, well versed in Mair. "He won't be there", said this friend, gloomily. Accordingly, I went to Mair's club prepared for disappointment. He arrived only a quarter of an hour late, and we had a most agreeable luncheon. "Look here," said Mair, in the course of this lunch, "why shouldn't we meet *every week* for lunch?" I invited him to come to my club a week later. He accepted. He did not turn up. I wrote asking if there had been a misunderstanding. The reply came, full of apology. "May I come next week instead?" Again he did not appear. Two or three weeks passed, and we met in the street. "Look here," said Mair, "I never see anything of you. Why not let us lunch sometime?" I fixed him with a gimlet eye. "If you will *keep* an engagement", said I, "I will make one with you; but you don't *keep* engagements." We made no appointment at that time, or ever again; but depended thereafter solely upon casual encounters. Now I hope nobody will think that I tell this story for the sake of discrediting Mair. I tell it merely to establish the point that he was so deeply immersed in social engagements that it was by a lucky chance only that one secured his

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company. A minor point, also, is that this uncertainty in the matter of appointments ran through all his activities. He meant to keep appointments; but no man as involved as he was in so many schemes and marvels could ever be regular in his habits. I fell into the way of being pleased whenever I met him, and this I think is what a number of men who might have been his intimate friends must have done. Whether he had really intimate friends, I do not know. That he was possessed of intimate information upon an extraordinarily large number of men and affairs, I am sure. His journalistic instinct was remarkable. And his mind was so nimble that he was at all times able to utilize his information. He was my notion of a born journalist, whose pen (I think he dictated) was in a way never still, as his brain was never still. His death is a misfortune; but I think his life must have been a disappointment, because he was at his best, and at the height of his power and activity, five or six years ago. Think of this, in the early thirties! The war gave him a tremendous opportunity for the exercise of his talent, and I feel that if he had been able (with greater tenacity) to take fortune at the flood, he might have lived longer and might have risen to really immense heights in the political world, as well as in that realm of wasted genius, the periodical press. He had the gifts to do anything. Only his dissipation of those gifts prevented him, I am sure, from being a world figure.

* * * *

I have been told an extraordinary story, of which I hope I have the details right, that might serve as the basis of a novel illustrating the theme, "The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley". An English publishing firm recently resolved to establish itself at a distance from London, retaining its London offices purely for purposes of distribution. What were to be the precise limitations of the country establishment, I do not know. Whether it was intended to print and bind all the firm's books (as is done by Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons' establishment at Letchworth), or a few of them (as has been done by other firms); or whether there were other schemes involving only the stocking of books, and a more healthy place of employment for members of the staff, has not been revealed to me. Those secrets were known only (I understand) to the active projectors of the plan. It was certainly, whatever the details, a bold and original move, for I see no reason at all, except the vital one of centralization, why publishers should congregate in one corner of our land. In America, certainly, prominent publishers are to be found at hundreds, and even thousands, of miles from New York; and in Germany (as I was recently explaining) there is a not dissimilar intellectual aeration of the country. But in England, at any rate in modern times, publishers have concentrated in one or two small districts in London. There is a cache of publishers in the neighborhood of St. Paul's Churchyard; another in the neighborhood of Covent Garden; and a third group near the British Museum. But the firm of which I speak was resolved to do what so many of us resolve to do, and that is to "live in the country". For some time a serious study was made of possible salubrious districts. A thorough exploration of railway time tables simplified the choice of a county and a situation. An immense amount of trouble was taken. Journeys, explorations, consultations, and other deep matters occurred. Finally a place was found. It was at the right distance from Lon-

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don. The accommodation was suitable. All was ideal. Those who were responsible were entirely satisfied. They entered into negotiations. A price was settled. Everything was completed, and all were jubilant. When, suddenly, a discovery was made which staggered everybody. The lease contained a clause that no factory, no business of any kind, could be carried on within the range of the property purchased. Not even the smallest printing machine could be set up privately in a shed or in a single room of a house upon the estate. Absolutely forbidden. The sellers were adamant. The result was ruin for the scheme. What follows, I do not know. The publishers in question are active and determined; but they have had a serious setback. If I hear any further details I shall mention the facts in these pages.

* * * *

By the time these notes appear, the Memoirs of Colonel House, which form a work of world wide importance, will have been published, in America at any rate. They should throw much light upon many important questions of international politics, and they will be read with great respect and eagerness by all students of modern history. What is not generally known, perhaps, and what seems to me to constitute a unique compliment to a firm of literary agents, is that upon his own initiative, and without any outside prompting or touting, Colonel House put the British and foreign publishing arrangements for his Memoirs into the hands of Messrs. A. P. Watt and Son. I do not think that there can ever have been given so spontaneous a testimony to the value of the literary agent. All the other distinguished volumes of memoirs published lately have been the result of elaborate pains on the part of literary agents, who have been responsible for the initiation of every one of these coups. Moreover, I believe the action to have shown the wisdom one would expect of such a man as Colonel House, because although there are some men to whom the very name of a literary agent is an abomination I am convinced that these authors suffer every form of exasperation and confusion as a consequence of their dislike. I hold no brief for Messrs. Watt or Messrs. Pinker or Messrs. Curtis Brown; but the experience of many years has shown me that the agent is for the author a safety valve and a guardian, while for the publisher he is quite equally a safety valve and — if not so obviously a guardian — a fellow worker in the field of letters. The agent knows all possible markets. He knows relative prices. He appreciates something of the difference between imprints. He knows which publishers, that is to say, are most likely to handle with sympathy and with the weight of appropriate prestige any particular book or series of books. Authors are amazingly ignorant of all these matters. Furthermore, I depreciate strongly (as a rule, and with definite exceptions) the direct communication of authors and publishers. Authors grow pettish, and publishers (as an agent once told me) are even more temperamental than authors. The cure for all troubles is the agent, who can be slanged by both parties. Colonel House has done well.

* * * *

Last month I mentioned that I should probably be meeting all the authors in the sunny south. I have not met a single author. The south has been only fitfully sunny, it is true, and perhaps all the authors have been keeping within doors. Besides, even if they are about, the remarks by

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Thomas Burke which I quoted here two or three months since as to the insignificant appearance of authors will explain why I have not noticed any authors. One cannot approach every insignificant person, notebook in hand, and demand to know if he is an author. I saw one man on the train, indeed, who looked as if he might be an author, and he (having no doubt read Mr. Burke's article) looked at me also as if he thought I was an author; but luckily we both remembered we were strong, silent Englishmen, and did not "speak each other in passing", as the ships do. However, I believe the real truth to be that the authors are all scattered over the world's surface. John Galsworthy, I understand, is lecturing in America, though upon what subjects I am not told. Arnold Bennett is in Rome, finishing his new novel (which was untitled when I last heard of it) and no doubt observing with interest the snow which has been falling in that part of the sunny south. In Rome also is E. V. Lucas, who is writing there his new topographical book "A Wanderer in Rome". (Mem., by the way, for E. V. L.: What would be the matter with a book by himself called "A Wanderer on the Riviera"? Probably he hates the Riviera, but a really good book covering the whole coast, from Toulon to Bordighera or beyond, and written with E. V. L's charm, would be a godsend to benighted Rivierans.) Aldous Huxley is in India, where he should find incomparable new material for the employment of his learning and his wit. The Sitwell brothers are, or have been, at Amalfi. Somerset Maugham is in South America. Sir Hall Caine, Phillips Oppenheim, and P. G. Wodehouse (whose easily written but extremely buoyant, amusing book, "Bill the Conqueror", I have been reading as a holiday comfort) are all somewhere between Saint Raphael and Monte Carlo. Compton Mackenzie is on the point of paying a flying visit from the Channel Islands to London, to lecture twice. Hugh Walpole (whose place in the case of one lecture Mackenzie is taking) seems to be fluttering between London and his home in the north of England, and is finishing a new romantic novel to follow "Harmer John". Walpole, by the way, is going to America in the autumn, so his many friends there may look forward to seeing him once more in the flesh. H. G. Wells is again in the south of France, and is finishing and revising what I think will prove a very important novel indeed — if not one of the most important novels of this generation. It should crystallize the whole of Wells's energetic and original philosophy of life. Coming, as it will do, after "Christina Alberta's Father", which has not only been a popular success but has led to the remarkable rediscovery of Wells by the snobs, it should create a furor. There has already been some gossip about this book, based upon very little in the way of real information; but there will shortly be a great deal more talk, for it is the most ambitious work Wells has ever written. I had better not mention the book's title, but I think it legitimate to confirm a rumor as to its length. This novel, which in Wells's work as a novelist will take the place which "The Outline of History" fills in his non-fictional output, will be published in the first instance in not fewer than two volumes.

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The edition of P. G. Wodehouse's book which I am reading (as stated above) is that published by the esteemed house of Bernhard Tauchnitz, and I am interested to observe that the Tauchnitz editions have reestablished

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their popularity on the Continent. During the war, an attempt was made by a French publisher called Conard to establish a series which should permanently oust, among the Allied populations, the temporarily displaced Tauchnitz. I do not think the attempt can have been a success. Having agreed to make payments in English money, Conard found with the fall of the franc that to do this would be to saddle all but the most popular volumes with a crushing load. English authors, on the other hand, found that if they accepted their payments in French money (nominally as it would have been at par) they would get hardly anything for their work. Several contracts, therefore, were canceled. I see occasional volumes of Conard's library in the south, but the real rivals to Tauchnitz in towns frequented by the English are the cheap editions published by the English firms of Collins, Nelson, and Hodder and Stoughton. Tauchnitz seems to hold its own. And the reason I mention the series is that it is most instructive to glance through a list of the books contained in it which is sewn in at the end of some of the slighter volumes. This list reveals the fact that the Tauchnitz editions constitute what is practically a survey of English and American fiction of the last hundred years. There are striking omissions, of course, in addition to significant war-time silences; but from Sir Walter Scott to Berta Ruck the series does rough justice to novels written since 1800 in the English language. Let me give some examples, to show what I mean. There are twenty five volumes of Scott, and these, strangely enough, do not include either "Redgauntlet" or "The Talisman". There are fifty four volumes of Harrison Ainsworth, and eighteen of G. P. R. James. Fifty one of Lytton (which, however, include three novels which are in four volumes apiece, four volumes of "Miscellaneous Prose Works", and other items of minor interest). Fifty volumes give a good measure of Dickens's own works, and there are what bibliographers call "association" items. Charles Lever also comes off very well, with fifty seven volumes. (N. B. I doubt whether any other contemporary edition of Lever is as complete as this. It contains a number of books of which I never even heard.) The Anthony Trollope list is seriously incomplete, but it runs to seventy four volumes. Yet these sections, although interesting, are as nothing in comparison with certain other figures which I shall quote as showing the way the Tauchnitz series covers the whole period. One always wishes to know what one's grandparents and one's parents read hot from the press. Here is the answer. Mrs. Henry Wood, 50 volumes; Charlotte Yonge, 53; Edmund Yates, 25; F. Marion Crawford, 68; F. C. Phillips (in some cases with collaborators), 39, mostly a work a volume; James Payn, 70; Ouida, 65; Mrs. Oliphant, 83; Florence Marryat, 80; Mrs. Hungerford, 49; M. Betham-Edwards, 31; Miss Braddon, 107; and so on. Think of it! Those who find living writers too prolific will be gratified to learn that the only ones who compare with these oldsters are Sir A. Conan Doyle, 40 volumes; H. G. Wells, 39; and Arnold Bennett (including two collaborations with Eden Phillpotts), 34. It is true that the more ancient writers rarely get off under two volumes, and run sometimes to four; but the length of their books is the cause of this, and length was the fashion of the age. It seems strange to find Grant Allen represented only by "The Woman Who Did" (a very "daring" work of its day); and S. Baring Gould by three titles only.

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Mrs. Atherton has 24 volumes, and E. F. Benson 29; Richard Harding Davis 3, and "Elizabeth" 10. There is, however, a series of works by somebody unknown to me, and presumably of a past age, who is described as "The author of Vèra." Lady Georgiana Fullerton has 19; and Thomas Hardy 22. Thomas Hardy, therefore, wins. Of younger men, Joseph Hergesheimer seems to be easily first, with 7 titles. Sinclair Lewis has 3. Hugh Walpole has 2; E. M. Delafield, 1; Margaret Kennedy, 1; Douglas Goldring, 1; and Berta Ruck, 5. The interest of the Tauchnitz series lies in the fact that it is American and English current literature seen from the outside. Seen, also, from a peculiar angle, since the volumes must (presumably) be such as will appeal freely to holiday makers. That is why Florence Marryat looms so large (80 volumes), and why popular story tellers of real talent, such as Miss Braddon (107), Marion Crawford (68), and Rhoda Broughton (24), make constant appearances. One would not expect a large collection of books by George Gissing, and in fact there are only two titles; but on the other hand it is surprising to find R. D. Blackmore with only five titles, Rolf Boldrewood with only two, O. Henry with one, Edith Wharton with two; and Flora Annie Steel with two. In all that long list of productions there is room for only three titles by Clark Russell. Meanwhile, it is a welcome reminder to come across the names of Maarten Maartens, Richard Bagot, "The Author of 'Guy Livingstone'" (with nine titles), Whyte Melville, Miss Thackeray (with no fewer than a baker's dozen of volumes), Percy White, and J. H. Shorthouse — all of whom, in their extremely different ways, are worthy of much more attention than they get nowadays from busy novel readers. I observe that two of the late Henry Seton Merriman's novels which are unobtainable in England are included in the series ("Young Mistley" and "Prisoners and Captives"), and I am much intrigued by two books called "The Affair at the Inn" and "Robinetta", of both of which I have heard previously, which are stated to have been written in collaboration by Kate Douglas Wiggin, M. and J. Findlater, and Allan McAulay. Mrs. Riggs we all know, of course; the Findlater sisters are well known; and Allan McAulay is otherwise, as far as I am aware, the author only of one historical novel of more than average quality, called "Beggars and Sorners". She (for I think "Allan McAulay" is a pseudonym) may have written other works, but if so they have escaped me. I must investigate "The Affair at the Inn" and "Robinetta". Have I made it clear what an interesting catalogue this is of the Tauchnitz editions? I hope so. I believe that any historian of nineteenth century fiction should be greatly stimulated by contemplation of this list, on account not only of its conservatism and its inclusions, but also of its quite remarkable omissions. The list may not be conclusive, but it is at least highly suggestive; and there is nothing strictly comparable with it. I present the notion, for what it is worth, to the next historian of Anglo-American novelists.

SIMON PURE

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THE FICTION READER IN THE NEW SEASON

MANY people who read fiction cannot really be called fiction lovers. They like this kind of novel or that kind of novel. They are excited with E. Phillips Oppenheim and do not know what Theodore Dreiser is all about. Or they are worshipers of D. H. Lawrence and would consider it beneath them to enjoy an evening with Earl Derr Biggers. The truest lover of fiction is, I should say, the person who can sit down with a story, no matter what kind of story it is, and, if it is good of its kind, spend an enjoyable evening with it.

No one admires beautiful writing more than I do; but I confess that I can enjoy a good yarn, for the yarn's sake, even though the writing is far from beautiful. Is it not the reviewer's first duty to show his readers what type of book he is reviewing? Then the reader may reject the type, even though he respects the reviewer's opinion as to its excellence. Among the books that have passed in fine array before us this season, among those announced for early publication, are many whose authors are artists, and many more, to be sure, whose authors are honest workmen.

From other times there are still books which command the public, like James Boyd's exquisitely written Revolutionary story "Drums", the postwar "Soundings" of A. Hamilton Gibbs, the sparkling and impudent pages of "The Green Hat". Of the autumn novels I have a few confessions to make, and I wonder how far you will agree with me. I often wonder if readers ever agree with a reviewer. They constantly write in disagreement, but it is indeed the rare person who sits down to tell you, "Yes, you're right!" Louis Bromfield's "Possession", I found just as satisfying as "The Green Bay Tree" and, in detail if not in plotting, a far better book. Bromfield has the quality which most novelists of his age lack, of making a room or a person exist in three, sometimes four, dimensions. If you are fond of Galsworthy, you will find Bromfield equally interesting. Naturally, he is not yet so fine an artist; but he is well on the way. To John Erskine's "The Private Life of Helen of Troy" I came late, prejudiced by the fact that I had heard so much of the lady. It is a companionable, a sparkling, a wise book; one to be laid alongside the bed and read for sheer amusement. Its success is thoroughly deserved, its public a growing one. Hugh Walpole always writes well; but he has seldom constructed a story so completely diverting as "Portrait of a Man with Red Hair". It is adventure plus beauty — one of those novels which, it can truly be said, you do not put down until you have finished. Willa Cather presents difficulties to me; for although I appreciate the fine writing in "The Professor's House" I am always looking for as perfect a piece of work as "A Lost Lady", or as rich a portrait as "My Antonia". "Thunder on the Left" seemed to me a fantasy as satisfying as anything that had happened along in years until Marc Connelly's "The Wisdom Tooth" made its bow on Broadway. As I look back on Morley's wistful and bitter novel, I am forced to say that I don't quite know what it's all about;

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but the point there is that I thought I did as I read it, which is perhaps all that is necessary. Sherwood Anderson will never do so great a book as "A Story Teller's Story"; but in "Dark Laughter" he strikes occasionally the same depth of beauty and understanding. Fundamentally, Anderson seems to be the poet, and like many poet's novels "Dark Laughter" is emotionally diffuse. So many people have acclaimed DuBose Heyward's "Porgy" as the classic of the American Negro that further word of it here is unnecessary, yet I shall never forget the thrill of reading it in manuscript. In Heyward we find a poet who understands the principles of dramatic narration. "Wild Geese" is an amazing first novel. It springs from the soil, it is simple, occasionally melodramatic, always interesting. A. S. M. Hutchinson, since his early books, has always been difficult for me to read. I found "One Increasing Purpose" hard going; but this is only one opinion. There are many folk who do not usually enjoy novels, and many who do, who find this a brave, entertaining, and purposeful book. "The Perennial Bachelor" is written with charm and distinction. The first part seems more successful than the last; but Anne Parrish has a most unusual quality and a superb sense of characterization.

The new season has already at this writing brought us many books of worth as well as popularity. In "Jericho Sands", Mary Borden attempted a most interesting technical feat, and was successful. She tells a story of mixed loves and religious prejudice, and tells it from both the prejudiced and the tolerant angle. It proves to be fascinating if not always pleasant. "Unchanging Quest" is without question Philip Gibbs's most important novel. He has never so well combined a background of international affairs with a moving story. Fannie Hurst attempted to do a most difficult thing in "Appassionata". Her choice of religious fanaticism as a subject, her method of introspective writing, her spendthrift use of color, were dangerous. She has succeeded; but the book hasn't the largeness of purpose that characterized "Lummox". Dreiser's two volume "An American Tragedy" is difficult reading for those who like their English pure; but its power is unmistakable, and the cumulative effect of small incident and small character in achieving drama and character in the large, is astonishing and memorable. Sarah Gertrude Millin's style is as good as it always has been, as sparse, as intense. Her new story of Africa may be a trifle melodramatic for some, but it is, nevertheless, constantly interesting. Mary Glenn is herself a vitally proportioned character. "The Vanishing American" is by no means Zane Grey's best novel. He knows and loves the Indian, however, and his descriptions are often telling. I. A. R. Wylie's "Black Harvest" is a striking piece of work. Its huge idea, its grotesque detail, its poetic beauty of phrase, commend it to the discriminating. In "Black Valley", the academic Raymond Weaver proves that he is a novelist. Some of the scenes in this story of missionary life in Japan are as vivid as anything in recent fiction. In "Tinsel", Charles Hanson Towne has dared to make fun of the middle western lady of wealth and position. He dares, also, to satirize the denizens of Newport. It is genial fun, a rather usual novel, but one that should amuse many people before the year has run its course. Castellated grandeur forms

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the background for Francis Brett Young's "The Dark Tower". In this fairly well told story sturdy plot vies with much atmosphere for first place.

Many of the books mentioned in the following paragraphs are seen as yet only in publishers' announcements; some of them will have appeared long before these words are printed. Yet we can tell what most of them will be like. Charles G. Norris's "Pig Iron" is far and away his best book. This detailed story of a man who resolutely kills the poet in himself at every turn and is a tremendous success in life is, I think, better than Dreiser, a better book in fact than Frank Norris ever wrote — although I have a feeling that his younger brother will consider this statement as heresy. There are passages of great beauty, of rhythm which has heretofore been lacking in Mr. Norris's style. The narrative is punctuated by scenes of humor and characterized all along by a knowing, balanced view of life and an observation of fine detail. "Spanish Bayonet", Stephen Vincent Benét's romantic tale of Florida in the Revolutionary period, is as swift and colorful a novel as I have read in many years. He has captured his period in a few quick strokes, and spends the rest of his time telling a stirring story, with beautiful phrases and striking scenes. Frank Elser's "The Keen Desire" is a book about a newspaper man, written with intensity and a passion for truth telling which involves realistic detail. Harvey O'Higgins has said fine things of the book. Among other things he maintains, "The book is . . . another shot in that battle for better ideals which is being fought by most of our younger writers." "Fifty Candles" is a small mystery story from the expert hand of Earl Derr Biggers. Its background shifts from San Francisco to the famous beach at Waikiki.

Books from Yale men ornament the spring lists with persistence. Thornton Wilder, whose undergraduate days were marked with brilliance, has written what promises to be a rather sophisticated literary curiosity in "Cabala", which will be his first published book. John Wiley follows his successful "The Education of Peter" with a social study of young love and marriage in "Triumph". Richmond Brooks Barrett publishes a second novel, and F. W. Bronson reveals himself as a writer of brilliance in "Spring Running". There are some half dozen other titles from graduates of this institution, but it is scarcely fair to mention more of them here.

Heywood Broun has hit on an unusual idea in "Gandle Follows his Nose", and it should be one suited to his philosophy. It is of course a thinly veiled fictionizing of the most modern methods of education. Alice Duer Miller writes with a grace that is possessed of few of our women writers. Those who read her unusual "Instruments of Darkness" when it appeared in "The Saturday Evening Post" will look forward to finding it in a volume along with other absorbing tales. L. Adams Beck, otherwise known as E. Barrington, has written a fictionized life of Buddha, which is to be called "The Splendour of Asia". The novel should prove doubly interesting, since it gives the public at large its first chance knowingly to compare this popular writer with her nom de plume.

Another Irish romance is announced for Donn Byrne. I had thought that his next novel was to be a story of St. Paul, but apparently "Hangman's House" continues somewhat in the old vein. Back to sheer romance in "The Black Flemings" goes Kathleen Norris

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with a story of a lovely heroine who works out her destiny in spite of the wicked deeds of those about her. T. S. Stribling, who proved in "Birthright" that he could tell the story of primitive people well, has taken the simple folk of the Tennessee mountains as the characters for "Teeftallow". And Emma-Lindsay Squier gives us a collection of Indian folk tales in "Children of the Twilight".

Historical romances of one sort and another abound. John Trotwood Moore, long a student of Andrew Jackson, has written another bold romance of the fiery President and called it "Hearts of Hickory". Naomi Mitchison writes with fire and beauty and a large dash of cleverness. Her "Cloud Cuckoo Land" is a story of Athens and Sparta in the fifth century B.C. Polan Banks, in "Black Ivory", transports us to the New Orleans of romantic Creole days. Victorian Boston and England have been chosen as background by a young lady, Esther Forbes, whose publishers announce confidently that she will take her place along with Anne Douglas Sedgwick, Anne Parrish, and Margaret Kennedy. From a glimpse at advance proofs I am inclined to agree with them. Isabel Paterson essays the Elizabethan period with probable brilliance in "The Fourth Queen". By this time, if talking of things constantly ever makes them true, we could call the work of James Branch Cabell historical. His "The Silver Stallion" is the last romance he will write about his mythical province, Poictesme. It will stand as the third book in the series, between "Figures of Earth" and "Domnei". It is subtitled "A Comedy of Redemption".

Adventuresome in title but modern in setting is "The High Adventure" by Jeffery Farnol, the story of another high born vagabond along the roads of fortune. "The Golden Beast", by E. Phillips Oppenheim, I have read with rapt interest. It is one of those mystery stories which depend upon marvelous and seemingly impossible inventions for their thrill; but who are we to say that any adventure in science, no matter how improbable it seems, is not likely? This is Mr. Oppenheim's best thriller in some seasons. In "The Land of Mist", Conan Doyle's first novel in many years, he writes as always tightly and fascinatingly. A young reporter, investigating mediums for a great London paper, encounters astonishing and thrilling adventures which are, first to last, spellbinding. "Odtaa, or Change for Threepence" is said to follow the manner and method and somewhat the setting of "Sard Harker". If so, it should be read immediately. Only once in years does such a beautifully written shocker as "Sard" present itself. "Riders of the Wind" is a first novel with a good deal of dash and fire — an emotionally adventurous story set in England and the Orient. Good reading, this, for those who like their stories light and swift. Sir Harry Johnston's "Relations" combines events in Australian gold fields with British life in general. Knut Hamsun's lighter vein is again shown in "Rosa", a continuation of "Benoni". A fascinating book with an unusual background is "The Village in the Jungle" by Leonard Woolf, Virginia Woolf's husband. If, however, the jungle prove too torrid, Edison Marshall's "Child of the Wild" will transport you to the bleak coast of Alaska.

Modern life interpreted by various modern authors stands in grim array before us. An early novel of Sheila Kaye-Smith, "Starbrace", reprinted for the first time in this country, shows a purposeless young Englishman finding

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life difficult. "White Fire" by Louis Joseph Vance ventures into theatrical circles and has a fling at the double standard of morality question. Harvey O'Higgins again attempts psychoanalytical fiction in "Clara Barron". Wallace Irwin studies divorce from the child's angle in "Mated". Arthur Train in "The Blind Goddess" dramatizes in fiction his acute knowledge of society and the law. Geoffrey Moss, in "Whipped Cream", writes a strikingly original study of a group of English aristocrats in the puzzled mazes of neuroticism and shifting normality. Brand Whitlock, out of his experiences as our Ambassador to Belgium, gives us in "Uprooted" a study of Americans abroad showing the contrast between those who would become Europeanized and those who cling to their heritage. Ernest Pascal's "Cynthia Codentry" depicts the struggle for adjustment of a young girl who finds herself drifting aimlessly in New York's social set. "The Hounds of Spring" is a story of afterwar days by a member of the youngest generation, Sylvia Thompson. And "Proud Revelry" by Amber Lee furnishes the portrait of a youth whose life is one drinking party after another.

All in all, this should prove an interesting season for the voracious reader of the novel. There are many more titles that I should like to mention here. I can think of another dozen or so that cry for notice, and twice as many again that are more than worthy and may prove highly popular. After all, though, no one can adequately choose your reading for you. The best we can do is to point the way. No one knows better than the editor or publisher how tastes vary. You will never always agree with one reviewer. You will not always agree with popular taste. To be an independent reader is one of the greatest joys. To enjoy, without prejudice, and to be sincere in the expression of that enjoyment, is a true gift. It is only the reader who is willing to express an original viewpoint who is truly an interesting conversationalist about books. I have always admired the man who is willing to say at a sophisticated dinner party that he enjoys dime novels. Try it some time, if you do. If nothing else happens, your statement should at least prove a powerful stimulant.

—*J. F.*

THE PEDDLER

By Marian Van Rensselaer King

PEDDLING needles, cotton, pins,
Wand'ring gipsy of the street —
Passing slow from door to door
With tired feet.

Who gives him a friendly smile?
Who buys of his homely wares?
Closed doors await him in all streets
Through which he fares.

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RECENT BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

By Anne Carroll Moore

"'Cuckoo, cuckoo! Come out and play,
The Spring, the Spring is here today!'

THE princess heard him, and from that moment she began to pine away with longing to see the spring and the world. . . . 'Let me go out into the world and see the spring. . . . Let me go at once!' cried Goldenhair. . . . She opened the crystal door, and out ran the princess so fast that the old nurse could not keep up with her. . . .

"Now when the princess got in the garden she was so happy that her feet could not keep still a moment. She danced about chasing butterflies and birds and picking flowers. Her heart was so full of joy that she began to sing, and just at that moment a Whirlwind came by, fell in love with her and before her nurse's very eyes caught her up and flew away with her."

The story of Princess Goldenhair and her rescue from the Whirlwind's castle on the mountain top where winter and summer meet is not entirely responsible for certain radical changes in the form if not the substance of this review. There are other reasons even than the compelling stories of "The Polish Fairy Book", no one of which is more appealing to a New England imagination than "The Enchanted Doughnuts" — doughnuts that flew out of the pan as fast as they were fried until the air was full of them. "The people all came running out at sight of the doughnuts and all marvelled at their wonderful fragrance and delicious taste." And to the boy, Kasimir, sitting on a big stone catching the flying doughnuts and eating them, it seemed that they were led by one that had golden wings and that the golden winged doughnut always dodged out of his way. "Leave me alone!" it said. "For if you catch me all the others will fly away." It is a mouth watering tale for those in any land who like doughnuts, yet holds warning, for by doughnuts hard as bullets were the wicked forester and his wife done to death in the end.

These Polish stories are rendered into English with unexpected freshness and intimacy by Elsie Byrde, who made her translations with certain adaptations from various books at the University Library in Warsaw. "Did you know that Poland once belonged to the fairies?" she asks her own little nephew and niece in England with whom she first shared the stories. Anticipating their ignorance and ours, she tells in a charming dedicatory letter how rich in fairy tales the Polish children are. An eleven year old New York girl of Polish parentage who is reading the book is enthusiastic in praise of it, and thinks any child who cares for fairy tales would like it. "The Frog Princess" is the only story she has yet found that she has read elsewhere, and as her range is wide and her appreciation keen, I predict that

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"The Polish Fairy Book" will find many friends in America. Regretfully do I realize that it might have reached more of them in time for Christmas if I had not put off reading it until the cuckoo called.

And here's another book so charming in appearance I can't think how anyone could overlook it. Yet I'm glad "The Goblins of Haubeck" sat tight inside their green-as-grass covers until "the spring crept into Hinzelmann's veins". Glad that "Hinzelmann stayed at home and felt the spring winds blowing past the kitchen windows and smelt the little bunch of lilies-of-the-valley in a glass on the kitchen table. So he climbed to the top of the stairs with the churn on his back and he rolled the churn down again with himself in the inside of it. . . . And the Wood Carver came in and caught him. The Wood Carver did not usually come home so early in the afternoon. But the spring had crept in to his veins, too, and he wanted to take a walk with his wife. And he opened the door to see the family churn bumping down the stairs with Hinzelmann's delighted face at one end of it. . . .

"'The man is very angry', Hinzelmann said in a small voice. 'But how was I to know that he was coming home? If I had not rolled downstairs in the churn I should surely have burst. It is a feeling that comes over me every spring!'"

A small book is this one of Alberta Bancroft's, but one to be cherished for its goblin lore, its definite quality of belonging to some little old world city with belfries, its subtle humor and its restraint. Its appeal is to children who already know their fairies well enough to find the places where the goblins are when they go abroad. Harold Sichel's drawings are as delightful and sympathetic interpretations of text as one could wish for in a book of its kind.

"Yesterday I took Suzanne to see Guignol." It is Anatole France speaking from one of his tales of Pierre and Suzanne, and whoever knows Paris in springtime will take a seat beside Suzanne along the Champs Elysées. "When the curtain went up we saw Guignol himself appear on the scene. I recognized him: it was certainly he . . . the little pigtail which danced and jigged so comically at the back of Guignol's neck . . . the green coat and black cocked hat. . . . Guignol is a valet and wears a livery. Gringalet his son wears a blouse. Mademoiselle Suzanne takes Gringalet's part and I Guignol's. . . . Guignol and Gringalet have long been making for a mysterious village known only to

From "The Apple Tree"

themselves. . . . But this village was more difficult to find than the palace of the Sleeping Beauty that lay undiscovered for a hundred years. There was a certain spice of magic in the

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matter for the region was inhabited by an Enchanter."

Now "Little Sea-Dogs" does not seem to me a very good title under which to arrange the inimitable tales of childhood from "Pierre Nozière" and "My Friend's Book". The form of the book, too, leaves something to be desired by those who have always associated Fanchon, Catherine and little Jean, Marie and Jacqueline with Boutet de Monvel's pictures for them.

Marcia Lane Foster's pictures in color suffer also from being poorly reproduced. But we may at least be grateful for a translation which brings vignettes and stories into one book and in a form that assures a wider reading among grown people as well as among children. There could be no better antidote for the pseudo scientist in matters of child psychology not covered by contemporary intelligence tests.

From Guignol to Punch and Judy is now easily done, thanks to the delightful and inexpensive reprint of the old Cruikshank drawings for "The Tragical Comedy or The Comical Tragedy of Punch and Judy" with its introduction by Charles Hall Grandgent connecting it with the Grand Guignol of the present day. In a bibliographical note at the back George Cruikshank describes the manner of taking down this version of the old puppet play for which he was engaged to sketch the scenes by a London publisher more than a century ago. The play has been out of print for forty years and we confidently look to this revival to restore Punch and Judy shows to Central Park and Boston Common, not to mention other parts of the country where they once flourished in open spaces.

As I look back across Manhattan's snow drifts to Christmas and books which came too late for review, "In the Endless Sands" stands out for its authenticity of background and the competency of its writing. Evelyn Scott, the novelist, and her husband, C. Kay Scott, have made a fascinating story of the adventures of a nine year old American boy who wanders away into the Sahara Desert, where he meets a little Arab girl who is just his age but doesn't know it. After days of strange and thrilling experiences, Jackie Lawrence is restored to his distracted parents and Fatma finds a home for her homeless little Mohammedan self on Christmas Day. The book bears the subtitle "A Christmas Book for Boys and Girls", but its publishers were wise to refrain from printing it on the cover jacket. For while children enjoy reading a Christmas story at any season if it is a good story, that label becomes a death sentence in a bookshop the day after Christmas. It would be sad indeed to think of the lively hero and heroine of this book shut up in a stock room for months when the story has precisely that dramatic associational value to children of nine or ten years old that lends vivid interest to their study of geography and history.

"Everything is just as it is in the Northern Sahara and all the things that are in the book actually happened (excepting the dreams — which don't happen to people — people just happen to them)", say the authors. The dream parts are convincing evidence of the reality of Jackie Lawrence as a living character. They have the unmistakable quality of dream stuff rather than the made up substitute so often found in children's books. Edwin Avery Park has made a frontispiece in colors and other illustrations which lend pictorial value to the story.

A new edition of Greville MacDonald's "Billy Barnicoat" is a re-

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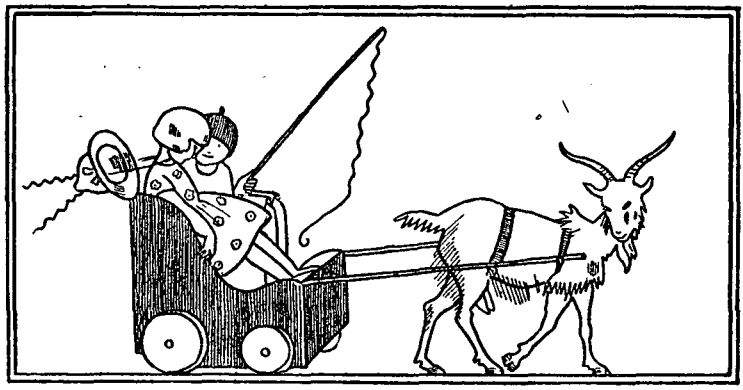

From "Sur Pattes"

minder of another true story of place as well as of child character. I know of no other such intimate picture of life in a Cornish fishing village. In form the book is less bulky than the English edition and presents a more readable page, although Francis Bedford's illustrations are not quite so clear in reproduction.

Stories of individualized character and strong local flavor are America's special contribution to literature for children. It is significant that our stories are sought for translation into other languages rather than our histories, biographies, and books of travel. We have reason to feel proud of such recent additions to them as Grace Moon's "Chi-Wee", the little Indian girl living in the American desert of today; Mrs. Hooker's "Cricket: A Little Girl of the Old West" with its vivid picture of the life of a delightful child at an army post in the early Seventies; and Constance Lindsay Skinner's "Silent Scot", a fine story of adventure during the American Revolution.

Such stories came to mind as I was reading Carl Sandburg's "Abraham Lincoln" — a book full of stories and suggestions of stories, as it is rich in the very facts children most want to know. A veritable mine of human treasure from which to read aloud or to pore over by oneself. And that growing boys and girls like to lose themselves in such a book, I can testify from long observation. What a relief it is to keep Lincoln alive all through both volumes — feeling the life of the prairies behind and around him; feeling, too, the onrush into our own day. While we may ask for a one volume Sandburg "Abraham Lincoln" for boys and girls, we cannot afford to wait for it. The book as it stands is, in such parts as may be chosen, for the whole family, in the reading rooms of public libraries, as well as in the homes of children whose parents are reading it.

It is good to know that so strong a writer as Elsie Singmaster has gone beyond the boundaries of Pennsylvania in charting a new history for boys and girls. "The Book of the United States for Young People" marks, I feel sure, the beginning of something richer than the storm tossed textbook and the series type of history book of one period after another. It is accompanied by valuable suggestions of much reading of other books. While I should have preferred the narrative of Miss Singmaster's story to flow without break from its dramatic be-

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ginning — with the books now scattered throughout the text at the back in the form of an annotated subject list — it will be interesting to learn how this feature of the book affects the interest of the young reader of today. Miss Singmaster has also written "The Book of the Constitution for Young People", a story of the creation and growing influence of our Constitution; but this book I have not yet seen.

While the tide of American history rolls high over Murray Hill, "The Apple Tree" breaks into blossom for Easter and "The Velveteen Rabbit" hops back into print once more. Margery Williams Bianco should be a very happy person with so distinguished a trio of artists to make pictures for her stories as William Nicholson on a spring holiday, Arthur Rackham at play with Cecco and Jensina, and Boris Artzybasheff whose drawings struck sparks from Padraic Colum's "Forge in the Forest".

And from France, along with the new big books of André Hellé, "L'Arche de Noé" and "La Belle Histoire que Voilà", comes a delightful little book of simple stories for children in which animal life is described amid country scenes of great charm. "Sur Pattes", by Jacques des Gachon, with its delicate decorative drawings by Andrée Sikoroka, is the book awarded the prize offered in 1924 by the American Committee for Devastated France, after consultation with French publishers, for the purpose of encouraging the publication of better children's books.

The Polish Fairy Book. Translated and adapted from the Polish by Elsie Byrde. Illustrations in color by Livia Kadar. Frederick A. Stokes Company.

The Goblins of Haubeck. By Alberta Bancroft. Illustrated by Harold Sichel. Robert M. McBride and Company.

Little Sea-Dogs. By Anatole France. Illustrated by Marcia Lane Foster. Dodd, Mead and Company.

The Tragical Comedy, or The Comical Tragedy of Punch and Judy. With an introduction by Charles Hall Grandgent and illustrations by George Cruikshank. Cambridge, Mass.: Washburn and Thomas.

In the Endless Sands. By Evelyn and C. Kay Scott. Illustrated by Edwin Avery Park. Henry Holt and Company.

Billy Barnicoat. By Greville MacDonald. Illustrated by Francis D. Bedford. E. P. Dutton and Company.

Chi-Wee. By Grace Moon. Illustrated by Carl Moon. Doubleday, Page and Company.

Cricket: A Little Girl of the Old West. By Forrestine C. Hooker. Doubleday, Page and Company.

Silent Scot. By Constance Lindsay Skinner. The Macmillan Company.

Abraham Lincoln. By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace and Company.

The Book of the United States for Young People. By Elsie Singmaster. George H. Doran Company.

The Book of the Constitution for Young People. By Elsie Singmaster. George H. Doran Company.

The Apple Tree. By Margery Williams Bianco. With drawings by Boris Artzybasheff. George H. Doran Company.

The Velveteen Rabbit. By Margery Williams Bianco. With drawings by William Nicholson. George H. Doran Company.

L'Arche de Noé. Texte et dessins de André Hellé. Paris: Garnier Frères. New York: Brentano's.

La Belle Histoire que Voilà. Texte et dessins de André Hellé. Paris: Berger-Levrault. New York: Brentano's.

Sur Pattes. Par Jacques des Gachon. Illustrations de Andrée Sikoroka. Paris: Aux Editions du Monde Nouveau. New York: Brentano's.

MORE RECENT BOOKS

St. François d'Assise d'après les Aquarelles de P. Subercaseaux Errazuriz moine Bénédictin de Solesmes. Marshall Jones Company. *A pictorial life of St. Francis in a series of fifty color plates of great beauty and interest to children. The accompanying text is given in both French and English.*

How Music Grew. By Marion Bauer and Ethel Peyser. G. P. Putnam's Sons. *This is the first book to give the history of music from prehistoric times to the present day to music lovers of all ages in the form*

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of a continuous narrative simple enough to be read by the audience to whom it is dedicated: "Young readers of nine to ninety." The selection of pictures is exceptionally good and the book forms a valuable addition to library collections. It should be given a more effective binding.

Alice in Orchestralia. By Ernest La Prade. With a foreword by Walter Damrosch. Doubleday, Page and Company. *The introductory story is a frank play upon "Alice in Wonderland" in the interest of orchestral music. If you don't like it skip the story and read the excellent descriptions of the various instruments not to be found elsewhere. The book may be relied upon for authentic information and has the quality of awakening interest in a new subject.*

Puck in Pasture. Poems and pictures by Elizabeth Mackinstry. Doubleday, Page and Company. *Not produced as a children's book but contains both poems and pictures children will enjoy, by an artist who is also a musician.*

Folk Songs of Bohemia. Illustrated by M. Fischerova-Kvěchová. Words and music by Dorothy Cooper. Translated and published by Raf. D. Szalatnay, New York. *A festive, artistic picture book as well as an attractive addition to song books for children. Similar in form to "The Cock and the Hen". Both books were printed in Czechoslovakia.*

Number Three Joy Street. By well known English authors. D. Appleton and Company. *While "Number Three Joy Street" is decidedly more interesting than "Number Two", there remains some question as to the direct appeal of these annuals to children.*

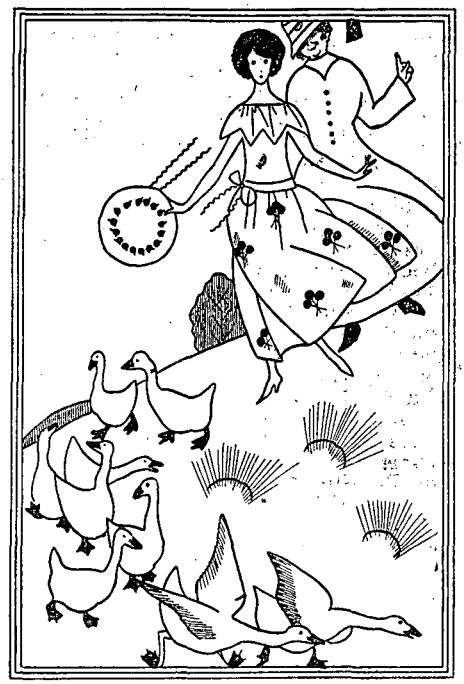
The Little Girl Who Curtsied. By Mary and Margaret Baker. Duffield and Company. *Another book of charming silhouettes done around a slight story, by the authors of "The Black Cats and the Tinker's Wife".*

The Adventures of Uncle Lubin. Told and illustrated by W. Heath Robinson. Frederick A. Stokes Company. *The revival of a nonsense story told in a series of pictures less amusing to American than to English children.*

The Rabbit Lantern. By Dorothy Rowe. Illustrated by Lin Jin Tang. The Macmillan Company. *Chinese pictures with very real charm. The stories are not distinctive.*

Twilight Stories. By Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith. Houghton Mifflin Company. *Stories associated with the kindergarten days of the authors.*

Silver Pennies: A Collection of Modern Poetry for Children. Selected by Blanche Jennings Thompson. Illustrated by Winifred Bromhall. The Macmillan Company. *A good selection designed for children under ten. The suggestions heading each poem are too obviously made for teachers who distrust poetry for its own sake. They should be edited out of future editions.*



From "Sur Pattes"

The King's Breakfast. Words by A. A. Milne. Music by H. Fraser-Simson. Decorations by E. H. Shepard. E. P. Dutton and Company. *Mr. Milne's famous cow, king, dairy maid and queen set to music, with new verses.*

Fairyland and Footlights. By M. A. Jagendorf. Illustrated by Stephen Haweis. Brentano's. *Five plays for children which may be given indoors or out. The illustrations are suggestive for stage sets, as well as drawings of unusual quality.*

Silverfoot. By Maud Lindsay. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company. *A story of three little girls on a southern plantation during the Civil War.*

The Plucky Allens. By Clara D. Pierson. E. P. Dutton and Company. *A story suggestive of "The Widow O'Callaghan's Boys".*

Little Captive Lad. By Beulah M. Dix. Illustrated by Eric Pape. The Mac-

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millan Company. *A new edition of a well loved book.*

Toto. By Katharine Adams. The Macmillan Company. *I have not yet read this new book by a popular writer for girls, who has European background. This story begins at Rheims in France and ends in New York.*

Fledglings. By L. A. Charskaya. Translated by Hana Muskova. Illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff. Henry Holt and Company. *A sequel to "Little Princess Nina", which has been very much liked by girls. I have not yet read "Fledglings".*

Joan and Nancy. By Archibald Marshall. Dodd, Mead and Company. *Selections from novels of the author which make a continuous and interesting story of twin sisters who are twelve when the story begins.*

Tales of a Grandfather. By Sir Walter Scott. Abridged by Elsie M. Lang. Frederick A. Stokes Company. *A one volume edition in readable type of a book which has never yet been given attractive form.*

The Bright Islands. By Padraic Colum. Yale University Press. *The second book of Mr. Colum's Hawaiian tales contains more of the historical ones.*

Wonder Tales from China Seas. Edited by Frances Jenkins Olcott. Longmans, Green and Company. *An attractive little book of the more obvious Chinese stories. It should be suggested in the study of China by children.*

The Children's Book of Celebrated Bridges. By Lorinda Munson Bryant. The Century Company. *Interesting full page photographs of bridges.*

The Katharine Pyle Book of Fairy Tales. Written and illustrated by Katharine Pyle. E. P. Dutton and Company. *A retelling of the fairy tales the author loved best when a child.*

The Boys' Book of Arctic Exploration. By Irving Crump. Dodd, Mead and Company. *The achievements of the explorers of the Arctic regions from the earliest days down to the discovery of the Pole and the later attempts to learn more of the North.*

The Living Forest. Written and illustrated by Arthur Heming. Doubleday, Page and Company. *This story of two boys and a man cast away in the Canadian forests contains plenty of woodlore.*

The Jungle Pirates. By L. E. Miller. Charles Scribner's Sons. *An adventure story set in South America. It is an interesting and well written story of the illicit egret plume trade along the Orinoco.*

The Yellow-Maned Lion. By Ernest Glanville. Harcourt, Brace and Company. *Older boys will be interested in this vivid biography of a lion in his native jungle.*

The Cruise of the Cuttlefish. By Francis Lynde. Charles Scribner's Sons. *The adventures of three boys in the motor boat "Cuttlefish".*

The Golden Table. By R. D. Paine. The Penn Publishing Company. *The tale of a treasure hunt that turned into an adventure with a revolution in the West Indies.*

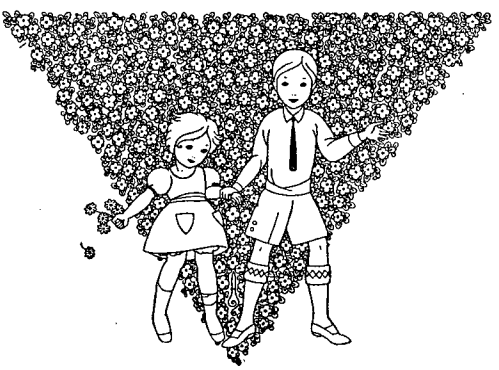
Pirates of the Delaware. By Rupert Sargent Holland. J. B. Lippincott Company.

Red Diamond. By Samuel Scoville, Jr. The Century Company. *A good adventure story by a well known writer for boys.*

Boys' Book of Camp Fires. By Frank H. Cheley. W. A. Wilde Company. *Practical information about camping in the woods.*

The Boys' Book of Canoeing. By Elon Jessup. Illustrated by Charles E. Cartwright. E. P. Dutton and Company. *A practical varied treatment of a subject that needed a special book. The illustrations were made by the man who did those for "The Boys' Book of Ships".*

The Boy Mechanic: Book IV. Popular Mechanics. *These books are too popular to need a note.*



From "The Apple Tree"

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THE NEW YORKER

Plays for the Intelligentsia—Revivals, Good and Fair—Chinese and Negro Shockers—The Great Gatsby Himself—Two Plays with No Purpose Save to Entertain

A SEASON which had developed heaves and almost blind staggers suddenly exhibited such a burst of speed and strength during the past month as to draw it up to the goal post, if not a winner, at least able to make a respectable showing with the more successful theatrical years which have gone before. The reason for this auspicious event that in some cases nailed S. R. O. signs outside theatres was a covey of plays that flocked into town almost within the week of one another. But before these are glorified two very important and very sad experiments must be mentioned, "The Great God Brown" and "Goat Song". In the former Eugene O'Neill has come a cropper while riding on a brave quest. It is probable that the increasingly strong limelight that has been turned on him these last few years and the larger audiences attracted to his plays have made him conscious, aware to the innermost parts of his being, that he is indeed a playwright, and as such has or ought to have a message. Messages have been the curse of the theatre before this, but always a new figure arises to deliver them. One can imagine O'Neill drawing pad and pencil to him and saying, "This must be significant; important in fact, and concealed in its lines must lie the story of all mankind." Having delivered this tall order to his subconscious he sets to work and the result is "The Great God Brown", a queer, jumbled, inchoate thing, a sort of "Everyman" whose characters indulge in a deal of talk about why the elements of failure are found in success and vice versa, and a deal more about Mother Earth whose children we are and who receives us at the end when our petty struggles are over. The theme contained beneath this welter of words is interesting enough: That man's nature is dual — that he goes through life playing a part before a curious or indifferent world, and never exposing his real self. To carry out the illusion the cast were equipped with masks which they flicked on and off their faces with great facility. When this ceased to be a novelty it became merely confusing, and along toward the end of the play when the actors began exchanging masks the doubt in the mind of this spectator was truly piteous.

In "Goat Song" the Theatre Guild achieved the same confusion that O'Neill so ably attended to himself in his own play. There is no particular evidence that Franz Werfel was teaching a lesson in his Slavic drama. We doubt if he was concerned with more than an exceedingly vivid picture of mob passion; but because he is among the more brilliant of the younger German playrights and because the Theatre Guild is probably out at all cost to remove the impression of its extremely vapid season, we are told that "there are mystical undercurrents, hidden profundities, vague and devastating associations implied in 'Goat Song' which will elude the spectator as they are unfolded upon the stage, but which, if his heart is

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open to the author's message, will return to trouble his memories and prick his thought". Dutiful audiences seeking for devastating associations and dutiful actors seeking to supply them lost sight of a really bully play, supported by one of the grandest casts ever gathered together on Broadway and set with a beauty that is a long step forward. We opened our heart, and the only profundity we discovered was that Pan, a part of every man, never dies.

Emily Stevens, sidetracked from another play, found herself in a revival of "Hedda Gabler" given by the Actors' Theatre, and we consider the change as happy a one as could be conceived. Miss Stevens as the bitter brooding Hedda is doing some of the finest work in her career. We wish, however, that in depicting suppressed emotions she wouldn't work her mouth like a rabbit's. The effect was peculiarly disturbing. Frank Conroy and Louis Calhern drifted into the cast after the wreck of "In a Garden", and the three of them combine to make this Ibsen offering one of the most important of the season.

Another play, by way of becoming a classic, was produced in New York for the second time. It is perhaps unfortunate that "The Jest" was first given so recently as 1919, since it is the easier to compare the present production with that in which the brothers Barrymore flourished until they grew tired of it. Alphonz Ethier who takes the part of Neri, the bully, gives to his performance a fine spaciousness for which a rôle so unrestrained is fitted. In watching him we could believe that he was even a bit better than Lionel Barrymore who preceded him. But for the rle of Giannetto, John is badly needed. Basil Sydney who aspires to Barrymore honors either does not agree with John Barrymore's interpretation or else he is unable to achieve it. The neurotic, effeminate, hysterical youth whose hatred for Neri was the only passion that exceeded his fear — a fear never concealed — is gone. In his place is the noblest Florentine of them all. Quite the noblest, we think. A grave eyed, dignified young man who sounds as if he were pleading his troubles to a court of law rather than whispering his humiliations to the friend who is to help him spin the web of his revenge. And his calm before Neri is something to behold. Surely this is not the youth who had hearts etched with a dagger on his back or whose wrists were twisted in the market place. If so he has forgotten the anguish of these incidents too easily. Basil Sydney has one of the finest voices on the stage, mellifluous, suave, and he uses it with compelling effect. As the flowing periods rolled from his tongue we had a suspicion which grew to a certainty that Mr. Sydney thought he was still doing "Hamlet". In all fairness to his followers he ought to get one rôle out of his system before undertaking another. As for Violet Heming who is Ginevra, the third considerable member of the cast, she seemed to be in grave doubt as to what her part implied. She stumbled about tentatively suggesting a wronged woman, a strumpet, a tender lover, and a girl who loves no one but herself. And the final curtain found her still trying to be all things to all men. Nevertheless "The Jest" is a fine play. Probably we should be acclaiming it if the first production had not taught us to demand something better.

Close on the heels of these decorous revivals "The Shanghai Gesture" arrived in town — as gaudy a melodrama as we have ever seen. David

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Belasco must have yearned to have his finger in this Chinese pie, so luxurious are the settings and so explicit. He contributed nothing, however, save McKay Morris, kindly loaned for the occasion and ungratefully received so far as we were concerned, for we thought his performance the only pallid one in the cast. It is not only the settings that go into detail; Florence Reed, as the mistress of the largest brothel in the world, is very very explicit regarding passion and the workings of her profession, and Mary Duncan almost kicks out the skylights in showing what a really good earnest nymphomaniac can do. The audience watched this performance with such amazement and incredulity that it forgot to snigger. All of which is to say that this is hardly the play to which to take Grandma unless the old lady likes hers raw and unbonded. We imagine that the opening night was by way of being an historic event. Three or four years from now people strolling past the Martin Beck Theatre will look up at the electric sign and murmur reminiscently, "Oh yes, I saw that way back in 1926." For it is that sort of play, and John Colton, the author, did it once before with "Rain". For our part we think we shall remember "The Gallery of Laughing Dolls" and "The Green Stairway of the Angry Dragon" long after we have forgotten the plot, and for these we are obliged to Frederick W. Jones, 3rd.

Superficially "Lulu Belle", in which Lenore Ulric is cavorting nightly to the scandal of many New Yorkers, might receive the same praise and the same blame as "The Shanghai Gesture". The plays are not too unlike in theme and treatment but fundamentally they are different. "The Shanghai Gesture" is a built up play consistently moving from point to point until a logical climax is reached. It is, in other words, carefully plotted. "Lulu Belle" has the barest excuse for a plot. It is nothing more nor less than disconnected pictures in the life of a Negro courtezan; and even the last act

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Inside Secrets of Photoplay Writing" by Willard King Bradley (Funk and Wagnalls). What seems like a fairly interesting book in a field which is becoming less and less open to the amateur.

"Sue 'Em" by Nancy Bancroft Brosius (Brentano). The first radio play printed in America contains many such radio stage directions as "attempts to walk, leans against the table".

"We Moderns" by Israel Zangwill (Macmillan). A pretentious study of modernity which reads better than it played.

"The Butter and Egg Man" by George S. Kaufman (Boni, Liveright). A racy comedy well worth reading and seeing.

"The Old Vic" by Cicely Hamilton and Lilian Baylis (Doran). The biography of a theatre — one of the most fascinating playhouses in dramatic history.

"Rosamond and Simonetta" by Gladys Brace (Vinal). Exceedingly florid, poetic little dramas.

"Lucky Sam McCarver" by Sidney Howard (Scribner). Finely etched portraiture and magnificent writing in this unusual play by the author of "They Knew What They Wanted".

"Lost" by George Agnew Chamberlain (Putnam). South America and New England form the background of a rather rambling drama of strong emotions.

"Naboth's Vineyard" by Clemence Dane (Macmillan). A simple telling of one of the greatest of stories — that of the downfall of Queen Jezebel.

"Small Plays for Small Casts" by Elizabeth Hall Yates (Penn). Seven short pieces designed for amateur production.

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fails to link these sordid tableaux together into a coherent whole. As a play it is weaker than its rival and at the same time stronger, since its emotional content is so much nearer the surface, so much more a part of all of us. In spite of an enormous cast which must have depopulated several cotton growing states, not to speak of emptying Harlem's black belt nightly, the job of carrying the play falls entirely on the shoulders of Lenore Ulric and Henry Hull. They bear it gallantly with finished performances which are the more to their credit when one considers what they and in particular Miss Ulric have to do. For this show she has acquired a darktown accent, speaks French like a Parisian, shoots craps like the original Big Boy, sings passable Blues, and dances a wicked Charleston. Mr. Belasco would have been kinder to her if he had cut her business and the play itself considerably. The first act is nothing but a comic strip showing life as it never was in Harlem, designed for no other purpose than to see how many people can be crowded onto a stage without spilling them into the orchestra. The second act does little to forward things; and although we gave up being shocked five years ago, we think the scene gratuitously disgusting where Lulu Belle dopes a would be lover who must weigh four hundred pounds on the hoof. The last two acts are splendid. For those who like slumming expeditions to cafés where quadroons get away with being white and whites with being quadroons, we recommend "Lulu Belle". It is easier to get to and may perhaps be cheaper.

It was with considerable dread that we went to see "The Great Gatsby". Since the book has not sold the million copies it deserved, it may not be amiss to announce that the play is adapted from the novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The adaptation was made by that veteran dramatist, Owen Davis, and this circumstance contributed to our anxieties. We feared to hear what he had done to the fragile, brilliant lines of the author. We feared that the result, to be specific, would be something like "Beware of Widows". Far from it, however. The lines have been left intact, the spirit of the book has been preserved, and the result is a play whose comedy shades into tragedy, whose sordidness is lifted sometimes into nobility — the most delicate satire we have yet seen on that world of form and manners where the best bred are sometimes the most shabby, and the worst bred shine with innate decency. For all its merits the book still remains greater than the play, but this is unavoidable. Certain scenes, certain situations, do not lend themselves easily to stage production, and some of Fitzgerald's most glittering lines are better read than spoken. Let no one be deterred from a visit to the box office on these accounts. "The Great Gatsby" ranks high with the best of the plays now showing. An excellent cast headed by James Rennie and Florence Eldridge give an excellent performance marked by its intelligence.

"A Weak Woman" was another of the plays presented which helped revive our fainting hopes for a good season. By no means as important as "The Great Gatsby", it still furnishes an evening of excellent entertainment. Adapted from the French of Jacques Deval with uncommon skill by Ernest Boyd, it provides a witty cynical vehicle for Estelle Winwood, Ralph and Frank Morgan. The Morgan brothers are actors to be depended on even though the playgoer invariably knows what to expect of them — Ralph is always wistful, and Frank always

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breezy. Estelle Winwood as the weak Parisienne who yearns to keep her virtue almost as much as she yearns to lose it, is quite incredible. As a type she probably exists nowhere in Paris, but who cares? She is complete mistress of the rolling eye and the provocative wriggle and she can say more things with one glance than most actresses can with a dozen. There is a spice of naughtiness about "A Weak Woman" which is just casual enough to give it flavor. It is a *sauce piquante* among the heavier and more substantial dishes offered.

In "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em" George Abbott and John V. A. Weaver have offered thin fare which yet has a tang about it that is already marking it as a current success. This comedy, is American, which means that it is built out of slang old and new, kept a hardboiled second night audience in convulsions most of the time. This effect was assuredly not arrived at because of the plot, which contains such durable material as rivalry in a department store boarding house, misuse of the pageant funds, the triumph of virtue and the exit of wickedness in a Rolls-Royce; nor was it due to the lines, which, while funny enough, have from time to time been equaled on the arid coast of the Rialto. It was due, we believe, to the fact that the play is perhaps better cast than any other in New York. The actors have flung themselves at the plot with such gusto that they have managed to make it considerably more important than it really is, and Florence Johns, Donald MacDonald, and Donald Meek, in particular, have a trick of making for themselves opportunities where none existed before. By which we do not intend to say that the cast is the only good thing about "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em". We've seen plays a lot worse before, and probably shall again — next week.

In all this helterskelter of playgoing we managed to take in one movie. We meant to see it before, but didn't, and so we hope it is not too late to report that "Stella Dallas" is probably the finest moving picture in the city with the exception of "The Big Parade". It has as little hokum as any picture we have seen, and as little sentimentality. There are no flaws in Belle Bennett's playing of the dear, garish Stella. Miss Bennett is an experienced legitimate actress and as such brings much to the screen which we have not seen there before and probably shall not see again until motion picture actors turn into people instead of things of sawdust and bisque. Lois Moran is convincing and delicately beautiful as a little girl. Only Helen Chandler as she played Hedvig can vie with her in child rôles, we think. We can forgive the heroics at the end of the film, but we cannot forgive the captions which drip pathos. The art director had an eye for line and has surrounded Alice Joyce with the beauty of "House and Garden" which she carries so well. A little more restraint, especially in the matter of bridesmaids, would have made "Stella Dallas" just that much more artistic. It couldn't, however, be more moving, and we do not ask for everything.

And so, having praised almost everybody but the coatroom boys and the usherettes, we close the month.

LARRY BARRETTO

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and* THE BOOKMAN'S *"Monthly Score". Such books as the editor specially recommends are marked with a star.*

TRIUMPH — Léonie Aminoff — *Dutton.* Sixth in the series of lively novels which do for Napoleon what "Glorious Apollo" did for Byron.

* DARK LAUGHTER — Sherwood Anderson — *Boni, Liveright.* In mood and in plot along the edge of the passionately psychological.

THE MAN THE WOMEN LOVED — Ruby M. Ayres — *Doran.* A swift romance of sentiment and excitement.

BOOTH AND THE SPIRIT OF LINCOLN — Bernie Babcock — *Lippincott.* Lincoln's assassin is followed to a plausible death by a great Lincoln student in a novel strongly tinged with supernaturalism.

MR. FORTUNE'S TRIALS — H. C. Bailey — *Dutton.* Further exploits and investigations of the whimsical gentleman detective.

BLACK IVORY — Polan Banks — *Harper.* Color and passion in old southern days.

* THE ENEMY'S GATES — Richmond Brooks Barrett — *Boni, Liveright.* A saga of a great American Jewish family written with clarity and intelligence.

GLORIOUS APOLLO — E. Barrington — *Dodd, Mead.* Lord Byron has never been more popularly envisaged, although the lady author does not always approve her hero.

THE SPLENDOUR OF ASIA — L. Adams Beck — *Dodd, Mead.* Buddha recreated by E. Barrington's other self.

THE LITTLE WHITE HAG — Francis Beeding — *Little, Brown.* An arch criminal from the East, the obviously clever American, and much cocaine mixed to form a standard thriller.

SPANISH BAYONET — Stephen Vincent Benét — *Doran.* A sparkling, thrilling novel of early Florida colonial days.

FIFTY CANDLES — Earl Derr Biggers — *Bobbs-Merrill.* A diminutive but nevertheless thrilling mystery.

JERICHO SANDS — Mary Borden — *Knopf.* In technique and performance this story of tangled loves and unbreakable prejudice is remarkably fine.

* DRUMS — James Boyd — *Scribner.* Richly documented story of a boy and his dreams in Revolutionary days.

* POSSESSION — Louis Bromfield — *Stokes.* Portraits of people in dramatic incidents and against backgrounds which are finely imagined and set down with rare taste.

* SPRING RUNNING — F. W. Bronson — *Doran.* A novel of the new younger generation — written with power and restraint.

* THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE — Willa Cather — *Knopf.* Able study of the changing values in the life of an academician.

THE GHOST OF GALLOWS HILL — Stanley Hart Cauffman — *Penn.* Patriotism and true love in old Philadelphia just before the Revolution.

ON AN ISLAND THAT COST $24 — Irvin S. Cobb — *Doran.* Irvin Cobb at his very best — O. Henry modernized.

BLACK AND BLUE — Octavus Roy Cohen — *Little, Brown.* Mr. Cohen puts his popular heroes through their well known paces with every indication that their popularity will remain unimpaired.

A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY — Ethel M. Dell — *Putnam.* Mystery and other disturbing elements touch the heart of a vicar.

* AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY — Theodore Dreiser — *Boni, Liveright.* Powerful study of the road to the electric chair.

THE CROOKED CROSS — Charles J. Dutton — *Dodd, Mead.* Exciting murder mystery on the routine pattern, including the knife of oriental design.

* THE KEEN DESIRE — Frank Elser — *Boni, Liveright.* A newspaper man wants passionately to tell the truth — and tells it as he sees it.

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THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HELEN OF TROY — John Erskine — *Bobbs-Merrill.* Scintillating speculations on the marital relations of the loveliest lady.

MENDEL MARANTZ — David Freedman — *Langdon.* Cheery optimism is the keynote of this witty epitome of New York's East Side life.

* CARAVAN — John Galsworthy — *Scribner.* Short stories that rank among the greatest in the English language.

JOANNA — H. L. Gates — *Barse, Hopkins.* A portrait of the modern girl with great emphasis on the modern.

* SOUNDINGS — A. Hamilton Gibbs — *Little, Brown.* A postwar love story that has won popularity because of its intensity and understanding.

THE VANISHING AMERICAN — Zane Grey — *Harper.* Mr. Grey's tribute to the Indian in a tale of the great west.

ROSA — Knut Hamsun — *Knopf.* The lighter side of Mr. Hamsun in a continuation of Benoni's adventures.

ARICIE BRUN — Emile Henriot — *Viking.* The life and death of Aricie Brun, French spinster, a wiser and more lovable Harriett Frean.

ONE INCREASING PURPOSE — A. S. M. Hutchinson — *Little, Brown.* Its increasing popularity proves that the purposeful novel is not outmoded.

MATED — Wallace Irwin — *Putnam.* Divorce and the children well presented.

THE BURIED RUBIES — Edgar Jepson — *Siebel.* A farcical story about a robber gang that is full of fun.

RELATIONS — Sir Harry Johnston — *Harper.* Sir Harry characterizes and digresses in Australian fields and English drawing rooms.

STARBRACE — Sheila Kaye-Smith — *Dutton.* Delicate psychology on a tragic but memorable theme.

RHODA FAIR — Clarence Budington Kelland — *Harper.* Full of life and color, with the Wandering Jew as an added attraction.

* THE CONSTANT NYMPH — Margaret Kennedy — *Doubleday, Page.* Sanger's Circus continues to perform to the delight of all readers, no doubt by this time including the Scandinavian.

* QUEER JUDSON — Joseph C. Lincoln — *Appleton.* A Cape Cod Queed affords amusement and pathos.

GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES — Anita Loos — *Boni, Liveright.* One of the few truly funny books of the age.

THE SEVENTH PASSENGER — Alice MacGowan and Perry Newberry — *Stokes.* An exciting narrative of graft, murder, and crooked politics with San Francisco as its background.

YE THAT JUDGE — Helen R. Martin — *Dodd, Mead.* Sweetness and light predominate in this newest of her Pennsylvania Dutch tales.

MARY GLENN — Sarah Gertrude Millin — *Boni, Liveright.* Another dramatic and intensely interesting story of African ways and days.

CLOUD CUCKOO LAND — Naomi Mitchison — *Harcourt, Brace.* Exciting adventures in the days of the Peloponnesian War. The author's long suit is action rather than atmosphere.

HEARTS OF HICKORY — John Trotwood Moore — *Cokesbury.* Old style historical romance about Andrew Jackson.

* THUNDER ON THE LEFT — Christopher Morley — *Doubleday, Page.* Tender fantasy with a strong note of bitterness beneath the surface.

THE DANCER'S CAT — C. A. Nicholson — *Bobbs-Merrill.* The love of an Englishman for a seductive Russian émigrée, combined with a minor mystery motif, makes a well sustained and engrossing romance.

* PIG IRON — Charles G. Norris — *Dutton.* By far the best book Charles Norris has yet written, and one of the finest achievements of the year.

THE BLACK FLEMINGS — Kathleen Norris — *Doubleday, Page.* A romance which is readable from first to last.

LITTLE SHIPS — Kathleen Norris — *Doubleday, Page.* Careful study of family life — well constructed and filled with honest sentiment.

WHOM GOD HATH SUNDERED — Oliver Onions — *Doran.* The great trilogy rearranged and combined in one volume. (*See page* 168.)

* THE GOLDEN BEAST — E. Phillips Oppenheim — *Little, Brown.* An unusual

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plot makes the best mystery from this author in several years.

* WILD GEESE — Martha Ostenso — *Dodd, Mead.* Flying close to the soil, these geese often take real dramatic flight.

THE PERENNIAL BACHELOR — Anne Parrish — *Harper.* How men take minor advantage of the ladies, told delicately and with power.

HIGH EXPLOSIVE — Gordon Phillips — *Dodd, Mead.* Extravaganza full of fun, with many sly hits at British bureaucracy.

LODGERS IN LONDON — Adelaide Eden Phillpotts — *Little, Brown.* The daughter of an English novelist makes a character study of the peculiar inhabitants of a London lodging house.

THE KEEPER OF THE BEES — Gene Stratton-Porter — *Doubleday, Page.* Life through the aviary — or life as the popular fictionist wills it.

THE THRESHOLD OF FEAR — Arthur J. Rees — *Dodd, Mead.* Murder by hypnotic suggestion is one of the gruesome details of a rapid running tale of the Scotch moors.

THE TORTOISESHELL CAT — Naomi G. Royde-Smith — *Boni, Liveright.* An almost impossibly innocent young lady disturbs the lives of several more interesting minor characters.

TEEFTALLOW — T. S. Stribling — *Doubleday, Page.* Mountain folk in sympathetic and dramatic portrayal.

* WOMEN — Booth Tarkington — *Doubleday, Page.* A penetrating yet vastly entertaining study of types of American mothers, and others of the fair sex.

STANLEY JOHNS' WIFE — Katharine Haviland Taylor — *Doran.* Winning your wife over again — a story of a proud man humbled.

RIDERS OF THE WIND — Elswyth Thane — *Stokes.* Most of us have a bit of longing for the far places that will create sympathy for this likable heroine.

* TINSEL — Charles Hanson Towne — *Appleton.* Social follies in midwest, Florida, and Newport.

WHITE FIRE — Louis Joseph Vance — *Dutton.* The dramatic world again the scene of impassioned romance.

THE BATTLE TO THE WEAK — Hilda Vaughan — *Harper.* A story of love and sacrifice in the Welsh hills, rich in atmosphere, otherwise not significant.

* PORTRAIT OF A MAN WITH RED HAIR — Hugh Walpole — *Doran.* An adventure and a character study skilfully written with great beauty.

LOLLY WILLOWES — Sylvia Townsend Warner — *Viking.* An unsatisfied spinster turns witch to release her inhibitions, and the result is an unusually diverting story.

NOAH'S ARK — Amabel Williams-Ellis — *Doran.* Wise and brittle dialogue in a tale of young marriage.

THE VILLAGE IN THE JUNGLE — Leonard Woolf — *Harcourt, Brace.* Virginia Woolf's husband writes a colorful story of jungle life.

BEAU GESTE — Percival C. Wren — *Stokes.* One of those adventure tales which all the world loves.

A SON OF HIS FATHER — Harold Bell Wright — *Appleton.* A simple drama of Irish spirits and western wiles.

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

BOOKS THAT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOU

1. "The Dark Hours" by Don Marquis (Doubleday, Page). One of the finest prose plays.

2. "The Golden Scarecrow" by Hugh Walpole (Doran). With the success of "Thunder on the Left" and "The Wisdom Tooth", we must not forget this exquisite fantasy of youth's desires.

3. "The Travels of Marco Polo" edited by Manuel Komroff (Boni, Liveright). A new edition carefully and intelligently edited, beautifully bound.

4. "The Abbess of Castro, and Other Tales" by Stendhal, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff (Boni, Liveright). Another addition to an important and growing list of good translations.

5. "Sanine" by Michael Artzibashev (Viking). A new edition of this grim and well known tale, translated by Percy Pinkerton.

Songs of Passionate Protest

LEONORA SPEYER in her new volume of poems, "Fiddler's Farewell" (Knopf), shows an amazing and marked advance over her earlier book, "A Canopic Jar". These are the poems of women, unrestful, seeking, demanding something of life more beautiful and yet serener. Mrs. Speyer has found, though, in the midst of chaotic beauty, a mean of quietness, a manner of repose. There are lovely sudden things like "Witch" and "Hark! Hark!" There are mystic, poignant things of much sterner stuff, like "Ballad of a Lost House" and "Of Mountains". The chief quality of her work, although there are lines of beauty, is the power she has of turning a strong mood into searching glamorous verse. This she does with unusual facility, and the resulting poems of women's moods are, to me, unique. The musician is always apparent in the songs and ballads. "Fiddler's Farewell" itself is one of the loveliest poems of music you will happen on in many years. It is passionate, profound, always interesting. It is not usual to discuss poetry as one would fiction, yet I should like to say of this collection of poems what I would say of a good novel: that it is never dull. Most poetry, even the best of it, is occasionally difficult reading. That cannot be said of "Fiddler's Farewell". There are many poems much better than "Affinity" which I quote below; but it illustrates admirably Mrs. Speyer's condensation of a dramatic incident and a dramatic mood:

Her mouth was shaped to happy tunes
That flying, she let fall,
But when his silence mended them
She could not sing at all.

She could not fly without her tunes,
They were her only wings,
But there were pleasant ways to walk
Among sure-footed things.

She walks content, her hand in his;
But neither of them sings.

The Inner Intimacies

OUR passion for knowing about our fellows in their intimate moods is not satiated. "The Diary of a Young Lady of Fashion in the Year 1764–1765" (Appleton), like John Erskine's "The Private Life of Helen of Troy", is notable chiefly for its modernity. Purporting to be a discovered manuscript of the period, it shows this

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eighteenth century flapper in anything but a grandmotherly mood. Her coquetries and adventures are spicily arranged and disclosed. She is shy, perhaps, but oh so knowing! She pursues love with a vengeance, and her own charms are as important to her as they are to the most rapidly charlestoning débutante of the current season. Whether she is authentic or not is of little importance. Her doings are already being followed by the multitude. Cleone Knox is eternal coquetry, and as such she is bound to be popular. The entry of May tenth will give you a taste of the quality of the book, which is a good one to keep on your night table — it might almost be said to be written in the bedside manner:

Lud! I have something to record to-day. Caught Ned kissing the Prettiest chamber maid in the Linen room! I felt it my Duty to warn him that licentiousness of all kinds is looked on very severely in this country, and unless he wishes the girl to end in the Bridewell, he had better leave her alone. This he took very badly, flying into a passion and telling me to mind my own damned affairs. I think Papa would be astonished to hear this, but thank Heaven I have the Generosity to hold my Tongue.

The Oxford Book of English Prose

THERE is little that can be said of this dignified and finely selected book except that it is worthy of the editor of "The Oxford Book of English Verse" and "The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse". The prose anthologist is confronted with an enormous and baffling task. He must bring to bear his own prejudices even more than in the choice of verse. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's introduction is interesting in itself, and the following paragraph seems to me to be worth bearing in mind:

But literature, I repeat, is memorable speech, recording memorable thoughts and deeds, and in such deeds at any rate the younger generation has not failed. Our fathers have, in the process of centuries, provided this realm, its colonies and wide dependencies, with a speech malleable and pliant as Attic, dignified as Latin, masculine, yet free of Teutonic guttural, capable of being precise as French, dulcet as Italian, sonorous as Spanish, and of captaining all these excellencies to its service. Turning over these pages before they go to the printer I recognize (not, I hope, too fondly) that the whole purpose moves to music. So, taking leave of a trade which in these years has at least not lacked the compliment of imitation, I look back somewhat wistfully on the fields traversed, to be searched over by other eyes to which I would fain bequeath, if I could so entreat the gods, a freshness of eyesight more delicate than mine.

It is true that you will miss, as I miss, modern Americans in this collection, but here we can only rely on the decision and the taste of a man who is himself a master of English prose.

The Increasingly Popular War

AMERICA is coming to look at the late war with eyes dimmed of horror and awakened to new interest. For this attitude Laurence Stallings is more or less responsible. Stallings is a great man. He has succeeded, not only in showing us the way without hypocrisy, but in putting the truth in such terms that it is understandable by the multitude. In "What Price Glory?" Maxwell Anderson helped him immeasurably. In "Plumes" he told his own inchoate but ringing story. In "The Big Parade" he tells the tale of the ordinary soldier. For the English fighting man John Masefield and A. Hamilton Gibbs wrote "Gallipoli" and "Gun Fodder". Thomas Boyd has immortalized the American in "Through the Wheat" and "Points of Honor". Now Hervey

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Allen comes along and gives us his amazing diary, written while he was in service, rewritten later. In Dos Passos's "Three Soldiers" we had an early, nervous, bitter picture of the conflict; but "Toward the Flame" (Doran) ranks with Masefield's "Gallipoli". It is a stupendous piece of emotional reporting. Allen is already well known as a poet. His "The Blindman" is one of the great poems of the war. Now, speaking as an American officer, who fought quietly and sturdily in some of the fiercest days of the war, he shows that he can write prose worthy of our most serious attention. Here is the officer who is not above criticizing army methods, but who has a sense of humor, and a sense of the passion and the glory of war as well as its futility. His simple narrative is filled with drama and humor. His comrades live in his pages. He shows restraint, courage, intense observational powers in this narrative. It is unforgetable and beautiful. It has the marks of a classic, and will be read as long as the World War is remembered.

The Eminent Psychographer

GAMALIEL BRADFORD has now become known as one of our most distinguished men of letters. His portraits of character, finely conceived and executed, form a long shelf of valuable and fascinating reading for any library. In a reprint of an earlier volume, "A Naturalist of Souls" (Houghton Mifflin), you may find some of the best of his critical work. His essay on Walter Pater is excellent. "A Gentleman of Athens" is acute, and the "Portrait of a Saint" is tender and stern, too. Most important to the student of Mr. Bradford's work, and of the art of biography in general, is the foreword which he has added to this volume, titled "Psychography". It is a confession and a definition. He acknowledges his debt to Sainte-Beuve, and discusses that eminent gentleman's method and his own. I have always recommended Gamaliel Bradford's books heartily to the lover of fine literature, to the lover of biography in its more intimate moods. You can scarcely afford not to read this essay of his, even if you do not go further in the book — which is unlikely. I take the liberty of quoting one paragraph:

> Psychography, then, is the attempt to portray character, and in discussing psychography we must evidently begin with a clear understanding of what character means. The reader will perhaps pardon my rehearsing the no doubt crude metaphysical analysis which I have found satisfactory for my own purposes. Character is quite distinct from individuality. Individuality, so far as we appear to others in this world, is a vast complex, based primarily upon the body, the material, physical organization, and consisting of all the past history of that organization, its name and all its actions and utterances in their sequence and concatenation with other circumstances and events.

— *J. F.*

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

COLONEL HOUSE'S MEMOIRS

By James W. Gerard

THERE is one excellent reason why everyone interested in the World War and in our participation in it should secure a copy of Professor Seymour's most interesting collection of and comments upon the diaries and documents of Colonel House, and that is that the newspapers publishing the work as a serial published only a portion of it, and that in mutilated form.

Brand Whitlock, our fighting and efficient Minister to Belgium, David Francis, so successful in his embassy to Russia, and the writer of this review are the sole survivors of President Wilson's war chiefs of mission in Europe. Walter Hines Page, Ambassador to the Court of St. James, Nelson Page, Ambassador to Italy, Sharp, Ambassador to France, Willard, Ambassador to Spain, and Penfield, Ambassador to Austria-Hungary, have all succumbed to the results of the strain and anxieties of those desperate times. It was among these ambassadors, from one capital to another — in London, Berlin, and Paris — that Colonel Edward M. House, friend and adviser of Woodrow Wilson, moved as silently, as unobtrusively, as some powerful *éminence grise* slipping through the corridors of the Louvre when Louis XIII was king. Chancellor or favorite, he holds a unique position in the momentous period of American history from which our country emerged greatest and most powerful of all the nations of the earth.

Nearly all of the close friends of powerful rulers have used their position for worldly gain or evil ends. The train of Cardinal Wolsey excelled that of his king, and his idea of his relation to his royal master was expressed in his phrase "*Ego et rex meus*". Gaveston, Despenser, Carr and Buckingham, Richelieu, Mazarin the Prince of Peace, and Talleyrand, to name only a few, sought their own or their families' aggrandizement. The most striking quality of Colonel House is his simplicity; he is modest, gentle, absolutely without vanity or worldly ambition, and his influence has ever been the best. As Viscount Grey of Fallodon said, "House longed to get good accomplished and was content if others should have the credit." Yet he was full of courage — it required no small degree of bravery to cross and recross seas infested by submarines, dangerous from floating mines. And in this danger Mrs. House shared.

As Professor Seymour makes clear, Colonel House early in the war saw the danger of the eventual involvement of the United States and advocated a policy of preparedness. One day during the war when the Colonel and I were practising revolver shooting in the suburbs of Berlin, the Colonel said to me, "These people (the Germans) do not realize the fighting qualities of Americans — some day they will go too far and drive us into war." (Incidentally, the Colonel is a crack shot with a pistol.) And so he was always for preparedness, which for us always means peace. I said on the steps of the City Hall in New York in March, 1917, on my return from Germany, "If we had a million men under arms

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we would not today be standing on the brink of war."

But this is anticipating. Before the story of the inside of American diplomacy in the World War, are interesting chapters of early life in Texas, of the beginnings of the Colonel's friendship with Woodrow Wilson, and of what took place behind the scenes before, during, and after the Democratic Convention of 1912. We learn of the making of the Cabinet and the choice of ambassadors in which Colonel House had a large share. Then there is the story of the writing in 1911 by Colonel House of the political romance which was published anonymously under the title of "Philip Dru — Administrator". Many of the reforms instituted by Philip Dru, who in the romance becomes Dictator of the United States, were in fact carried out during the Wilson administration.

The inherent interest of Professor Seymour's beautifully arranged book, however, commences with the Great Adventure — the voyage of Colonel House to Europe in the spring of 1914, just before the war, in the endeavor to prevent the awful catastrophe which thinking men sensed was impending on the world. I arranged a private interview for the Colonel with the Kaiser. It took place on the terrace of the Neues Palais in Potsdam as is described in the book. After the Kaiser and the Colonel had talked for some time I joined them — they were discussing the proposition of the Kaiser for an alliance for peace to include Germany, Britain, and the United States. Here my recollection is at variance with the Colonel's, my impression is that the Kaiser included France in the proposed alliance; but since this was the Colonel's interview, since I joined only for a few minutes at the close, his recollection should govern. Nevertheless, I should like to hear what the Kaiser has to say about this interview.

Colonel House visited me in Berlin again during the war — and in this book we have the details of his voyage and conversations, of his endeavors to find a way for peace. He met and measured all the men of mark in the governmental circles of Britain, France, and Germany. In my opinion, he accomplished great good. He kept the American ambassadors informed as to the sentiment of the people and the President at home, and he was able to tell us of the general situation, something most essential for those representatives of America cooped up with various countries at war. Sometimes ambassadors succumb to their surroundings and, forgetting their Americanism in the society of lovely duchesses and great titles in ancient and historic country homes, become, not American ambassadors, but mere advocates of the country to which they are accredited. It was not the fault of Colonel House that the peace plans of President Wilson miscarried. We learn how it was at one time the Allies and at another Germany that refused the peace offers and mediation of our President.

Looking with cool unprejudiced eyes at the situation in the years of war before our entrance, we see what a great part on the world stage was played by the silent, super-diplomat from Texas. It was little short of a diplomatic miracle that, engaged as he was first on one side and then on the other in most important negotiations, he was able to win and retain the regard of the statesmen of Allied and enemy countries.

Most interesting are his chapters dealing with the German submarine

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war, because in the Disarmament Conference, soon to take place, the question of the use of submarines will be one of the most important under discussion. Great Britain will want to limit submarines because by submarines Britain can be cut off from food. On the other hand we need the submarine for the defense of our long coast line. We cannot stake all on the result of one naval battle which might leave us at the mercy of the airplanes borne by airplane carrier ships. From these airplane carriers submarines stationed in each of our ports might protect us. Then there is the question of the use of the submarine against merchant ships. It will doubtless be a great surprise to the Germans to learn from this book that I was inclined to agree with Lansing in the position he took with reference to the arming of merchant ships. Merchant ships were originally armed against pirates and privateers — two things that no longer exist. I think we shall find great cause of dispute in this submarine and armed merchant ship question at the conference.

While not conceding anything of his Americanism, Colonel House believed, and justly so, that in the close union of English speaking peoples lies the salvation of the world. If we can start with the premise that war between the English speaking peoples is impossible and unthinkable, the world will have taken the first great step on the road to disarmament and universal peace.

It is fortunate that Colonel House secured Professor Seymour, Sterling professor of history at Yale, to compile this work and write what we may call the interpretive comments. The book is one that must be on every library table. It is as necessary to an understanding of the war as is the map of Europe.

The Intimate Papers of Colonel House. Arranged as a Narrative by Charles Seymour. Two volumes. Houghton Mifflin Company.

A PERSONALITY IN ART CRITICISM

By Robert Cortes Holliday

WHAT'S the matter with taking a leaf right out of this book? Royal Cortissoz has called his present volume "Personalities in Art", and, as is his taking way of writing, throughout the generous collection of kindly causeries a colorful accent is placed on the human aspect of the numerous personable figures considered, in the art of today and that of all time. The dean of our art critics is a ruddy person who loves to think of the old masters themselves as people; his constant endeavor is to present them warm and living to other people, his readers. The mark of this book, as of all Mr. Cortissoz's admirable work, is the whole souled, full bodied, human being kind of personality which fills it to the brim.

In a manner of speaking, Mr. Cortissoz does not write books at all — he just goes on. For years, with conviction, ardor, and passion, he has paddled on his way. Many fierce squalls in the world of art have broken over his ensign. They have gone down the wind. He is lusty now. His concern has been with enduring things: in a word, with the evocation of beauty. His business has been to "enforce the discrimination which is the central principle in the enjoyment of works of art". In season and out of season, he has pounded away on his theme, with charming erudition and ingratiating suavity of style.

Now, by way of example, I have in

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my eye one of the most brilliant and distinguished of contemporary American literary journalists; when he writes upon any theme you feel that beforehand he has prepared himself very thoroughly. When, however, Mr. Cortissoz is confronted with any subject in his field you feel that he has no need to bone up on it at all: he is thoroughly at home in it already. In making his point, he is full of droll stories and racy anecdotes. Reopening the volume before me, I light upon a piquant story of Degas, one most amusingly disclosing the hermit in that artist of the type the French like to call "illustrious":

> Talking with a friend he said: "You know Forain? Well, he has a telephone." "Yes," replied the friend, "I suppose he has." "Do you know what they do?" continued Degas. "They ring him up and they ring him up." "Naturally", said the other. "What of it?" "*Sacré nom de Dieu!*" exclaimed the master. "But he answers them!"

An indefatigable journalist if ever there was one, for several decades Mr. Cortissoz's weekly rostrum has been the Sunday New York "Tribune". And in the matter of that there is this which you may have noticed. They pull down the Madison Square Garden, and everything else almost; and they sell newspapers, and they merge them, and they set them new kinds of ways; but when you go through the "Herald-Tribune" today you come upon that same noble newspaper page which has always been Cortissoz. More or less lately he has taken charge of the department "The Field of Art" in "Scribner's Magazine". As critic and biographer he has published a number of volumes, including the definitive "Life of Whitelaw Reid" which is also a pretty comprehensive history of journalism, and the standard memoir of John La Farge. His courses of lectures at the Metropolitan Museum of Art have a remarkable attendance, being invariably given to packed audiences; and he does much "talking" elsewhere, in various cities. All in all he has been a potent influence, on the side of the angels, in the æsthetic welter of our time; with his touchstone "the constant interrogation of the masterpieces of the past", his heart with the "rectitude" of sound craftsmanship, and his gift of a flair for the imponderables, he has stood out like a beacon, a stabilizing force in art "currents".

"Art and Common Sense", the title of his first book of assembled critiques, is the note of this his latest book. "Pundits", "sacrosanct oracles", and all "pontificating" which would stand in the way of intelligent, human enjoyment of works of art he would cast into the pit. Further, he is an American critic who has his say about the "type of collector in the United States whose conduct in the presence of a European expert resembles that of a rabbit in the presence of a hungry boa-constrictor". Let me add that, with his stocky build, his distinguished imperial, his gorgeous waistcoats and fancy tweeds, and, in the heat of summer, his purple umbrella, he is, to my mind, one of the most satisfying spectacles afforded by the metropolis.

To come back to the book. "Personalities in Art", among other things, restores to Rembrandt all of the masterpieces taken away from him a couple of years or so ago by Professor John C. Van Dyke. Its thirty two chapters range all the way from Leonardo to Zorn, taking in the American business building, American industrial art, and the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum by the way. It is the talk of the most engaging, persuasive, and altogether likable thorough connoisseur that I know anything about.

Personalities in Art. By Royal Cortissoz. Charles Scribner's Sons.

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THE IMMIGRATION PROBLEM

By Henry H. Curran

"THE Melting-Pot Mistake" is the best book on immigration that I have read.

To begin with, there is a delightful absence of the charts, graphs, and curves that usually besprinkle a book on this subject. Gone, too, are the good old platoons and battalions of marshaled figures, standing at attention within their lined rectangles like so many tin soldiers on parade, and equally reticent of real information. Nor is there even a table to tell us of the tilt of the nose of a Croat, or the shape of the foot of a Finn. All, all are gone — the old familiar junk!

For this alone Professor Fairchild is to be thanked, and wreathed, and even crowned, by all who read books on immigration. I have seen and known many thousands of immigrants; but I never found a graph among them, nor other of the fuss and folderol that usually afflict their commentators.

There are positive virtues about the book, however, that speak for themselves to those who have to do with immigration. They should speak equally interestingly to those who approach the subject from the outside. The history of the affair, for instance, with which the book begins, is treated in such small compass, but with such thoughtful comprehension, that it includes both the accuracy and the area of a real bird's eye view. That is all we need. There is nothing abstruse about the story of immigration. A simple human annal of simple human beings, with cause and effect always obvious, it is better shown by broad strokes than by fine etching. That is the way of the author's picture of it, with an added *sine qua non* of his own definite opinion, free from prejudice or sentimentality.

There is no question about the opinion put forth. It runs straight as a string, through the general and historical reflections and then on into the livelier and timelier chapters, and through them to the very end. It is more than a string. It is as visible and unmistakable as a life line, or even a hawser. And it holds taut and firm throughout for an American policy that will allow immigrants to filter in among us in small numbers only, and of a kind only that may be considered more like unto us than unlike. That the "Melting Pot" long ago ceased to melt, is set forth so surely that we know it now for a cracked pot and no more. We may take comfort accordingly in the assurance that — now, at last — our country's settled policy forbids, for the future, any such indiscriminate immigration as that which nearly swamped us in the past. That day is done forever. No more!

But the best part of the book, to my mind, is that which has to do with "Americanization". Here is the problem of the present, and the future. We have so decreased the quantity of our immigration, and have so improved its quality, that the problem of the future concerns the immigrants already here much more than it does those still to come. How may they become Americans? That is the rub today. For our country is no more a melting pot now than it was last week or last year or even a long generation ago.

There are some seven or eight million aliens in America who are permanently part of the very warp and woof of our national life. Can they ever be real Americans? Should they be? And just what is a real American anyhow?

Professor Fairchild handles these pressing questions in a fashion that reflects not only an excellent power of analysis but also a very masterly and

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practical acquaintance with the subject in all its aspects. He is unsparing in his exposure of some of the "Americanization" claptrap that has been rammed down the throats of our alien resident immigrants. If he had written no more than that, his book would be worth reading and its circulation would be a service. But he has gone further. He has laid down practical conclusions and directions that are refreshing in their sane truth. So much buzzfuzz, in fact, has been uttered on this business of "Americanization" that one book like this, in contrast, rings a bell that carries over the countryside a clear note of its own.

If you want statistics, don't read this book. If you want anti alien bigotry or pro alien "sob stuff", don't read it. But if you want a reasoned, readable, and informed study of immigration, up to the minute and into the future, then do read it. Some of its minor conclusions may not find you in agreement. For my part, I differ with several. But the broad main stream is sound, and also entertaining. It is the best book on immigration that I have read.

The Melting-Pot Mistake. By Henry Pratt Fairchild. Little, Brown and Company.

THE WICKED CENCI

By Meade Minnigerode

CORRADO RICCI, formerly Italian Minister of Fine Arts, spent five years in examining all the documents relating to the Cenci, including seven records of the trial, manuscripts in the Royal Archives of the Roman State, in those of the religious confraternities of St. John the Beheaded, of the Crucifix and of the Stigmata, and in the secret archives of the Vatican. He excuses himself, at the end of his unbelievable labors, "if I have been forced to relate a story that is gloomy, sinister and at times unedifying by reason of the depravity of the figures it summons forth. . . . My desire has been to change nothing, to attenuate nothing, never to recede from my duty of setting down facts in all their harsh sincerity." Mr. Ricci's desire has been amply fulfilled.

The Cenci were not a nice family. The grandfather was a profligate embezzler; the father, Francesco, was a beast — "not only was he precocious in violence, but in sensuality also", the exponent of "a sorry and sordid tale, a long, vagrant litany of violence and turpitude . . . vulgar, furious, lustful, fierce, hospitable to every evil", an obscene degenerate, "a disgusting person" according to one of his retainers; two of his sons were criminal, indecent hellions who came to violent deaths; another, Giacomo, was a treacherous devil. In this unspeakable entourage, under the most appalling influences, the beautiful sister, Beatrice Cenci, grew up. And around her the vicious, murderous, licentious Rome of the 1590's.

It is not necessary, here, to go into it. The ghastly months at the castle of La Petrella; Francesco Cenci's second wife, Lucrezia, and his daughter Beatrice practically immured in their chambers, maltreated and beaten, subjected to the most revolting existence; the steward Olimpio who became the girl's lover; the conspiracies with Giacomo Cenci and others to dispose of the monster Francesco; the final catastrophe. They murdered him — Beatrice, Lucrezia, Olimpio and one other, and in the background Giacomo who planned and approved, and the two younger brothers, Bernardo and Paolo,

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who approved although they had not planned. They murdered him; and they did it very badly, spreading evidence of their stupidly conceived crime all over the castle. In time they were all arrested — all but Paolo who had fortunately died of a fever — Giacomo, Bernardo, Lucrezia, Beatrice, and many others. They were tried, they were all repeatedly tortured, they were convicted. Bernardo went to the galleys; Giacomo, the liar, had his flesh torn with red hot pincers, his head beaten in with a mallet and his body quartered; Lucrezia and Beatrice were decapitated. The girl was in her twenties. A ghastly story.

Of course one sympathizes with her. No modern jury in all Christendom would have convicted her, but the Pope of her day, who called himself Clement, was merciless. Of course they murdered Francesco; he should have been killed long before; the whole Cenci crew should have been killed; they should never have been born, including Beatrice herself. For she was a cold heroine, this unfortunate girl in her twenties, a haughty, superbly courageous, implacable avenger, the instigator and inspiration if not the actual hand of the conspiracy, a Cenci like the others without their degenerate vices. But the blood was in her veins. An endlessly pitiful figure, at whom one would not dream of casting the smallest stone. . . .

Mr. Ricci has performed an astonishing task, and produced an overwhelming work. He has battled his way through a host of documents, and gone down fighting. For the historian the two volumes are a treasure house; for the ordinary reader perhaps a somewhat overcrowded public gallery. There are so many names, so many details, so much testimony. The record of vices and crimes is sometimes so unexpectedly prolific. In the midst of it all — owing to the meticulous documentation, the retroactive use of evidence — some of the most dramatic moments come and are gone less vividly than one would have anticipated. At the same time, out of it all arises irresistibly the dolorous pageant of an incredible tragedy, caparisoned with unspeakable wrongs, much of the hum and roar of papal Rome.

Beatrice Cenci. All Rome followed her coffin to its grave; the legend of her martyrdom, of her self defense against a monstrous father, of her virginity — she who had had a child by her accomplice lover Olimpio — this legend immediately took root and flowered. Today, to many people, Beatrice Cenci is a Roman maiden who helped to kill her father, shall one say "for purity", of whom Guido Reni painted a lovely portrait. Mr. Ricci has left nothing of all this, not even the portrait. History has triumphed over legend and over art. Of Beatrice, except the record of her real miseries and ordeals, nothing remains, not even her poor grave which long years later they ransacked. But the fact is after all not so distressing as that she, poor soul, her miserable brothers and her infamous father, should ever have existed.

Beatrice Cenci. By Corrado Ricci. Translated by Morris Bishop and Henry L. Stuart. Boni and Liveright.

YOUNG ADVENTURE

By George H. Nettleton

CONCEIVED as a special memorial, and developed largely in the intimate mood of personal biography, this record of a pioneer group of American aviators broadens, in reality, into a basic chapter in the history of

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American naval aviation. In his own earlier volume, "The Victory at Sea", Admiral Sims declared that "the great aircraft force which was ultimately assembled in Europe had its beginning in a small group of undergraduates at Yale University". In an impressive foreword to "The First Yale Unit", he now pays unstinted personal tributes to individual members of that group — to Lieutenant Trubee Davison, who organized and inspired the unit; to Ensign Sturtevant, "the first American airman to make the supreme sacrifice in actual combat with the enemy"; to Ensign Read, "the first United States Naval Aviator to be killed in France"; to Ensign Kenneth MacLeish, shot down in gallant action with enemy planes; to Lieutenant Ingalls, who "may rightly be called the 'Naval Ace' of the war"; to Lieutenant Commander Gates, "one of three, of a naval force of some 5,000 officers and 75,000 enlisted men, whom I recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor".

The sympathy and just pride of the Commander-in-Chief in individual and in group achievement are sustained from a different viewpoint by Mr. Paine, as observer and chronicler of this pioneer unit. His two volumes give ample room for the daily incidents of "Plane Living and High Flying", through months of arduous practice; for episode and anecdote of actions overseas; for all the details that, in Macaulay's phrase, "constitute the charm of biography". It is a lively, human narrative, written *currente calamo*, with zest and contagious spirit suiting young adventure. The biographer himself has not lived to see his published work, but in it the abundant vitality and buoyant energy of Ralph Paine still seem persistent. Thus these volumes become, in an added sense, an enduring memorial. Through his generous interpretation of other lives his own life is made manifest.

If the dominant note of the first volume is anticipation, that of the second is realization. The scene shifts overseas. The tone deepens. Yet the pervasive spirit remains that of the college campus with its eager and unspent ardor. *Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus.* It is this feeling that masters even the tragic narratives of disaster and loss, from the first foretaste in the well nigh fatal accident that early crippled the leader, Trubee Davison, to the end that crowns the work in the concluding chapter recounting that last intrepid victory even in the death of Kenneth MacLeish. Intensely personal, these individual records blend diversity of experience into the common loyalty of comradeship of kindred minds. Hence the appeal of the story exceeds the local limits which its title may at first suggest, for it interprets broadly the spirit which found ardent expression wherever the boyhood of the campus met the challenge of manhood.

A memorial record in every sense, these volumes are dedicated "to the memory of Henry Pomeroy Davison, whose foresight, enthusiasm and faith made the Yale Unit possible". Intelligent foresight and administrative skill are, indeed, instinctively emphasized throughout these chronicles of actual achievement. Even the strict historian of military affairs will find much that enlightens the practical course of early American naval aviation. But the general reader will linger rather on the story of unselfish fulfilment of the promise of youth. Thus he will be close to the spirit of the author when he capped his final chapter with the epitaph imagined by a young college poet for a memorial stone:

And generations unfulfilled,
The heirs of all we struggled for,

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Shall here recall the mythic war,
And marvel how we stabbed and killed,
And name us savage, brave, austere, —
And none shall think how very young we were.

The First Yale Unit, A Story of Naval Aviation, 1916–1919. By Ralph D. Paine. Two volumes. Cambridge: Riverside Press.

MISS SITWELL AND OTHERS

By Herbert S. Gorman

EDITH SITWELL is possibly the most interesting of contemporary English women poets, not so much because of what she has to offer but because of the way in which she offers it. In this particular she is quite unlike such coevals as Irene Rutherford McLeod, Anna Wickham, Charlotte Mew, and a dozen other women (none of them very important) who make up the feminine wing of modern and "modernist" English poetry. "Troy Park" contains an adequate selection of her work, a selection that fully reveals those curious approaches to art that translate her into so individual a figure. It is possible that Miss Sitwell is like that old myth about olives — a taste for her must be cultivated; but, again like olives, it is difficult to see why. Rather is it more possible that the reader should leave his prejudices behind him when he opens her books. She is herself and should be taken as herself without any regrets that she is not the aura of Elizabeth Barrett Browning or Christina Rossetti. Her best work implies a delicate development of conscious and (by themselves) artificial terms that fall into a curious pattern composing a world of its own, a world that is both a Cocteau ballet and a Fragonard panel. This world is built up of concrete imagery. Grass is "noodle-soft"; there are "zither-tinkling" leaves and waters "like the sound of flutes". "The young crude sun flamingo-harsh, clapped its wings and flew across the marsh" and "Grey as a guinea-fowl the rain, squawking down from the boughs again." All this, of course, is deliberate, an attempt — generally successful — to reverse the ancient and honorable method of raising values. Instead of translating the finite into infinite terms — a course pursued by poets for generations — Miss Sitwell translates the infinite into finite terms. She is the Arius of modern poetry. She would never say that the withered leaves flee like souls before an enchanter's wand but she would note that souls flee like withered leaves, which is another thing altogether. Yet behind the subtle crystalline jangle of her artfully juxtaposed words there is the true adumbration of mystery that is necessary in any poem that achieves its objective. "Troy Park" includes some impressive examples of this work at its best. "Colonel Fantock" is one. So, too, is "An Old Woman Laments in Springtime". The highly developed sense of color, the daintily harsh word effects, the unusual and arresting images, and the peculiarly cool emanations of "Troy Park" may not entirely blind the reader to Miss Sitwell's limitations but they should go far to mitigate them.

W. L., who conceals his identity behind enigmatical initials, is also modern, as any venturesome reader who peeps into "Episodes and Epistles" will testify. But his modernity differs from that of Miss Sitwell in that there are no dainty or delicate elements. W. L. has been influenced both by Carl Sandburg and E. E. Cummings, and it is therefore but natural that most of his verse should be free, that initials

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at the beginnings of lines should bore him to death (a feeling that the writer thoroughly shares with him), and that the mechanistic urge of these modern times should be reflected in his themes. The curious delver will find a poem that employs an anatomical chart as the backbone (no joke intended) of the theme, another that compares time to a ragpicker, a third entitled "Epistle from a Returning Traveller to the Champion Jazz Horn Artist, New York City", and a fourth that is composed entirely of a list of the names of machines and machine parts. Its climax illustrates its method:

carbon steel hand taps
precision high speed ground thread taps
two and three fluted taps
spiral pointed serial hard machine screw
bent shank tapper taps
mud or washout spindle staybolt coupling
taps for pipes and tubes
short die hobs
long die hobs for the man who makes his
own dies.

This is reveling in words for the sake of words alone and it is decidedly dada. The emotional titillations implicit in it are so impressive that the writer has about decided to dramatize the Sears-Roebuck Catalogue.

It would be pleasant to digress interminably on this proposed play, but stern duty in the forms of Leon Serabian Herald, Mabel Simpson, and Martha Banning Thomas calls imperatively and W. L. must be left to his machines with the added comment that portions of his book, especially those portions that seem to spring from E. E. Cummings, are not without an authentic poetic urge. With which valediction the writer opens Leon Serabian Herald's "This Waking Hour" and promptly falls asleep over it. "A bird sings on the crater of a volcano", announces Zona Gale in her introduction to this book. "One is conscious both of wings and fire." One is conscious of neither. One is conscious of a young man with a foreign background and some intensity of utterance composing a poetry that fails to leap either into the air or into the volcano. It is always free verse and more often than not it is no more than a slightly elevated prose or an approximation of rhetoric. Mabel Simpson's "Poems" are on a higher poetical level. She has imbibed Emily Dickinson and William Blake to good purpose. There is often a mildly pleasing lyrical urge in her poems that renders them agreeable to read. Agreeableness may also be attributed to "Poems for People" by Martha Banning Thomas, but that is all. This trio of books arouses again in the mind of the writer the realization of how huge that group is that turns out mildly adequate lyrics, pleasantly worded portraits in miniature, and fairly intense revelations of soul moods. These people, by whom Miss Sitwell — limited as she is — seems a giantess, get published too easily. Their work belongs in what Ralph Waldo Emerson called "verses of the portfolio".

Troy Park. By Edith Sitwell. Alfred A. Knopf.
Episodes and Epistles. By W. L. Thomas Seltzer.
This Waking Hour. By Leon Serabian Herald. Thomas Seltzer.
Poems. By Mabel Simpson. Harold Vinal.
Poems for People. By Martha Banning Thomas. Boston: The Cedar Tree Press.

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IN BRIEF REVIEW

THE despotic egoist riding the floodtide of a brutal reactionary imperialism in Italy today is the outstanding figure of interest in world politics. The fact justifies the fluent, indeed eloquently written "Life of Benito Mussolini" by Margherita G. Sarfatti (Stokes). Written by an "intimate woman friend", with a preface by *il Duce* himself, it naturally presents him as Italy's greatest son. Fascism's best foot is put forward in an animated, sparkling narrative; its dark and sanguinary shadows are mellowed with golden idealistic light; and for the American who would gain an idea at first hand (Frederic Whyte's translation is excellent) of all that *fascismo* — from the Fascist angle — means and is, this is the book. But for all that Mussolini has been endorsed by such great international bankers as Thomas Lamont and Otto Kahn, we recommend that the reader, after perusing this glowing biography, look up the speech Dr. Eliot of Harvard made in New York last January.

In 1905 Poultney Bigelow, having been correspondent for numerous and varied periodicals, and having attained the age of fifty, retired from an extremely spirited life to the seclusion of a New York State farm. Here, after twenty years he evidently decided that his work was not yet finished. In consequence, he has written an autobiography, "Seventy Summers" (Longmans, Green), in which he recounts vividly, and with an admirable lack of caution, his many activities throughout the world. He uses his pen, however, not only for the purpose of narration, but pointedly to declare his wide opinions and to air his hobby, religious freedom. Although the book is too journalistic to have actual literary value, it is forceful, demonstrative, broad in scope, and one of the best autobiographies of its kind.

Paul de Kruif, the scientific adviser who supplied Sinclair Lewis with the accurate medical details of "Arrowsmith", in "Microbe Hunters" (Harcourt, Brace) proves the possessor of high skill in the rôle of biographer of celebrated bacteriologists. His non-technical method of presenting the lives of these immortal pioneers makes the volume one of the most exciting, yet instructive, we have read in recent months. The book begins with Leeuwenhoek, earliest discoverer of microbes by means of microscopes invented by himself, and succeeding chapters are occupied by Spallanzani, Pasteur, Koch, Roux and Behring, Metchnikoff, Theobald Smith, Bruce, Ross, Grassi, Walter Reed, and Paul Ehrlich.

During the years immediately following the war a book on Germany was a drug on the market. America had had enough; publishers, booksellers, the reading public, all shunned a volume which in any way recalled Germany to mind. With the return to postwar sanity, this situation is slowly changing as Germany creeps gradually back into the family of nations. Sidney Brooks in his "America and Germany" (Macmillan) realizes that the fate of the two countries is woven together and fearlessly tackles the question of

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their relationship during the critical years 1918–1925, taking as his text Herbert Hoover's words: "There is a country of sixty million people with whom the world has to live and whose economic coöperation is necessary to give life to the rest of the world." The Dawes plan and its probable effect is discussed in detail, and Mr. Brooks does not belittle the value to Europe of American dollars in his plea for a fair consideration of the German-American problem. An elaborate "table of personages" adds to the serviceability of the book but does not compensate for the absence of an index.

Patrick Braybrooke, youthful commentator upon G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Lord Morley, and Sir James M. Barrie, continues to write up the great and the good in the manner to which he has been accustomed. His "Considerations on Edmund Gosse" (Lippincott) is now off the presses. While Mr. Braybrooke's book about the books Sir Edmund has written about other books may lack for the man in the street some desired sense of pulsing, throbbing life, the critics, more familiar with such phenomena, may yet discern the Promethean spark. It has been no part of the author's plan to question the works of his subject. His volume, rather, is in the nature of a souvenir or testimonial.

The pleasing feature about Thomas Jefferson was that he grew old remorselessly. He did not, it appears, repent. Nor did he, oddly, yearn for an encore of those charming intrigues which had been his lot. He was one man who had no tears for his own funeral or a sorrowing to look once again upon the face of his Genêt. In the "Correspondence of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, 1812–1826" (Bobbs-Merrill) Paul Wilstach, grouping two genuinely early Americans, stays where an interlocutor should — in the background. Meantime, amid a sort of Duncan Phyfe setting — one so recently, so sadly Chippendale — the two remaining Colonials wrote their epitaphs across a Georgian scroll. Mr. Adams, it would seem, was forever philosophizing in the gilded snuff box manner, while Mr. Hamilton's chief critic felt a trifle more keenly the color he'd brought to the Continental scene. Mr. Jefferson would not, naturally, regret anything but that didn't prevent him from remembering he was a Signer or realizing that, in the long prevailing twilight, even then there were god hunters afoot. The tragedy of that highly individualized life was that it should gutter itself out in duet tempo — that it could not have been, on that last momentous July Fourth, the whole day's news. But then Mr. Adams was so pitifully, so wearily old.

The Right Honorable Sir James O'Connor observes in the preface to his sizable two volume "History of Ireland: 1798-1924" (Doran) that the Act of Union of 1800 was a "well intentioned blunder", the forcible insistence upon it by England an injustice and a crime, and he goes on to state that the Treaty of 1921, bringing Ireland intellectual as well as political freedom, seems to him "to be an eminently just bargain". The brief exordium indicates at once the scope, the strategic position, and the temper of this important attempt to sum up, fairly and in a spirit of detachment, "the case of Ireland *v.* England and the cross case of England *v.* Ireland — for there are well founded plaints upon both sides". The eventful Easter Monday of 1916 serves the author as a vivid introduction to a story which at

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once leaps backward to the years just preceding the nineteenth century and marches forward again with a great abundance of detail and a sense of history which never permits the writer's point of view to become offensive to those who may open the book for mere information. In Sir James's view "the political stability of the Irish Free State is assured".

Long ago now — or does it only seem so long? — D. H. Lawrence took the whole cosmos, for better or for worse, to be his oyster. His well known gesture of casting the resultant pearls was never more characteristic than in "Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine, and Other Essays" (Philadelphia: Centaur Press), a handsomely bound and printed volume in a limited edition. Two fifths of the book is devoted to "The Crown", a piece which occurred originally in a short lived magazine of 1915 called "The Signature" and is now made generally available for the first time. Mr. Lawrence assures us in a foreword that "The Crown" is "no use for a five minutes' lunch", and he never spoke a truer word. Beginning with the motif of the lion and the unicorn gone mad in war, he embroiders, elaborates, and zigzags through time and space upon the theme in a manner or manners variously passionate, ecstatic, scriptural, rhapsodical, and transmogrificational toward the conclusion that "the whole great form of our era will have to go". Whether the volume leave the reader limp with rage or with admiration, it insistently demands rereading for its verbal magic alone. For the true Lawrenceite it is nothing less than a gospel.

Jack Reed's haunting epitaph, "Fog", appropriately leads all the rest in the anthology of verse from "The Masses" and "The Liberator", 1912–1924, chosen and edited by Genevieve Taggard under the title of "May Days" (Boni, Liveright). Max Eastman follows with "Coming to Port", while Floyd Dell, third member of that outstanding triumvirate of the brave revolutionary days of the late 'teens, modestly lingers until page 150 to give us his sonnet "To Edna St. Vincent Millay". There are almost 250 other compositions of varying poetic merit. Miss Taggard has preserved what gave flavor to the "Masses-Liberator" years rather than "great poems", though the volume contains numerous examples of first rate work by writers who have had and are having their day in the sun. Among the more inflammable items is Billy Williams's "Ballad", which had the distinction of drawing a protest from Bernard Shaw. If Carl Sandburg's "Billy Sunday" is omitted, we get several hardly less outspoken examples of his muse. Here are verses with native humor and realistic philosophy, verses built to shock and debunk, verses doggedly lowbrow, and many other kinds. The editor provides an historical foreword and J. J. Lankes contributes striking woodcuts.

That somewhat dogmatic modernist who recently declared that he would scream if ever again he heard the name of Sir Thomas Wyatt, would do well to forego his exasperation (perhaps only the result of unfortunate classroom experience) and look once and again at the magic loveliness of a new anthology called "Elizabethan Lyrics" (Longmans, Green), chosen, edited, and arranged by Norman Ault. He will encounter Sir Thomas on the first page, where a calm rereading of "Forget Not Yet" may or may not prove its right to the position. In any case, he can skip. Mr. Ault is doubtless

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correct in believing his to be more thoroughly representative of the period covered than any other anthology, for it contains quite twice as many poets — 154 in all — as the largest of its rivals, besides numbering at least 130 more poems. Out of a preliminary selection of 2,300 lyrics, the editor kept 640, and in pursuance of his purpose to present the lyric poetry of the Elizabethan Age "as a living literary movement" he has arranged them chronologically, so far as possible. Mr. Ault's prodigious researches unearthed some unexpected treasures, no less than ten of the pieces now being printed for the first time.

At one or two strategic points in his "Paris, or The Future of War" (Dutton) Captain B. H. Liddell Hart has left his argument exposed to the objections of critics carping or sentimental. He will meet no great opposition from either when he asserts that "the destruction of the enemy's forces in the main theatre of war", which was the main objective of Allied generalship in the recent war, was both mistaken and inhumane. When he goes on to urge the adoption in future conflicts of what he calls the "moral objective" and then identifies this with attacks by aircraft, gas, or both upon civilian populations, there are sure to be charges of unfair use of the language. Captain Hart meets the ethical objection to attacks from the air upon women and children by observing that "in a a war between nations the damage cannot be restricted merely to the paid gladiators". "Paris" is a decidedly unsqueamish discussion of a subject none too lovely at best. The title refers to the Trojan person who aimed at the most vulnerable spot of his foe. In concentrating his intentions upon the heel of Achilles, this warrior very likely was using the "moral objective".

Those funny Seventies, Eighties, and Nineties of another century hold the centre of interest in the tenth number of "Valentine's Manual", entitled "The Last Fifty Years in New York" (Valentine's Manual, Inc.). Henry Collins Brown has surpassed himself in writing about the era of sashes on piano legs, hand painted coal scuttles, white cotton stockings, wax flowers, hired dress suits, Grecian bends, Henry Ward Beecher, pampas grass, autograph albums, Moody and Sankey, and calling cards with silk fringes. He tells us how the roofs of five houses in Brooklyn were blown off in the blizzard of '88 and how terrible everybody felt when Jumbo died. The illustrations are quite beyond praise, as usual. But really, Mr. Brown, Kipling did not write "The Shooting of Dan McGrew".

H. W. Nevinson has written what might be termed a prelude to the world's great drama in "More Changes, More Chances" (Harcourt, Brace). The drama is the World War; the prelude consists of a journalist's narrative from the end of the Boer War to July, 1914. The story is lightly enough written; but the events reported, in the light of today, are portentous. Consider the significance of these matters: political and revolutionary occurrences in Russia from Red Sunday until the fall of the first Duma, the beginnings of oil exploitation in Baku, the beginnings of unrest in India, Spanish fighting in Morocco, the woman suffrage movement in Britain, Russian oppression in Finland and Georgia, the Italo-Turkish War, and the first and second Balkan wars.

It is hardly possible to look seriously upon the object of Robert Haven

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Schauffler's "The Poetry Cure" (Dodd, Mead), an anthology which he describes as "A Pocket Medicine Chest of Verse"; and it is doubtful whether the compiler himself regards the book seriously. But if one can disregard such whimsical and imaginative headings as "Stimulants for a Faint Heart", "Massage for a Muscle-bound Spirit", and "Mental Cocktails and Spiritual Pick-me-ups", one may find that the collection contains a pleasingly large percentage of good poems. There is of course much waste material, as in most anthologies; but the various authors represented, from Shakespeare to Edwin Arlington Robinson, speak well for the editor's taste.

Henry Dwight Sedgwick's short history of Italy has enjoyed a peculiar and honorable place of its own for almost twenty years. His latest volume, "Spain" (Little, Brown), bids fair to equal its predecessor in fame and usefulness. It has been Mr. Sedgwick's main purpose to tell the story of Spanish literature and art, with politics as a frame, and he had done this in the manner of the best contemporary historians. The scope of the book permits him to give an account, suitable for beginners, of Spanish literature from the "Poema del Cid" to Don Ramón Pérez de Ayala (born 1882), and of painting and sculpture from the images and statuettes of the Phœnicians and Greeks to Picabia's announcement that "the objectivity of the subjectivity is in every case superinduced by the original sensation". Appendices containing references and a chronology add to the book's value for classroom needs or for the enjoyment of the general reader.

If you are one of the lucky few who successfully dodge automobiles, sidestep ptomaine poisoning, or arrive at the hoary old age of thirty without succumbing to the whirl of sinful modern life, there is yet hope for you. To become young, and to remain so, you must give attention to certain cardinal principles of diet. Such a platitudinous remark would pass unnoticed uttered by a mere amateur, but when Alfred W. McCann talks diet it is well to listen. In "The Science of Keeping Young" (Doran) Mr. McCann runs the gamut of dietary possibilities. The keynote of the book is milk and whole wheat bread; such old friends as eggs, fruit, sea food, and whole wheat bread loom before one with renewed potentialities. A good many of the old favorites are treated unmercifully, but then we all knew they were bad for us and only needed authoritative urging to make us relinquish them for a more balanced diet.

Two more volumes are available in the "Modern World" library (Scribner): "Norway" by G. GathorneHardy and "Russia" by Valentine O'Hara and Nicholas Makeev. In the Norwegian volume we find the stress on the social and cultural inheritance of the country, with concluding chapters on agricultural and industrial development. The Russian volume embraces a wider variety of topics and deals at length with the internal political situation. Mr. Makeev is a Russian who suffered imprisonment at the hands of the Czarist government; Mr. O'Hara, an Englishman who experienced like treatment under the Bolshevist régime. Their collaboration has produced an impartial, well balanced study which invites careful consideration. The authors maintain that "there is every reason to look forward to the complete restoration to health of Russia, politically, economically, and culturally".

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"Life and You" by C. Lewis Hind (Dodd, Mead) is hereby offered as Exhibit A in whatever controversy H. L. Mencken pursues on the comparative merits of American and English essayists. Exhibit B would be a volume of essays by Heywood Broun. Broun writes daily in the New York "World" and Hind writes weekly in the London "Daily Chronicle". The former devotes much space to the doings of one Heywood III and the latter chats interminably about Julius Cæsar (so called because he conquers — but by love), aged half past four. Hind's fancy is whimsical and charming; his style is exquisite. The book jacket says so, and it's true. It is also true that his manner is aimless and diffuse.

The tercentenary of the birth of George Fox has brought forth an unusual publication from the Friends' Historical Association of Philadelphia. The volume comprises "The Short Journal and Itinerary Journals of George Fox" (Cambridge University Press and Friends' Book Store). It further includes Fox's "Haistwell Diary". The work is edited by Norman Penney, with an introduction by T. Edmund Harvey. Here is a unique record of persecution borne for the advancement of unconquerable faith, and an account of the state of Quaker religion in seventeenth century England.

Carter G. Woodson has performed a service to history in editing "Negro Orators and Their Orations" (Washington, D. C.: Associated Publishers). Nearly fifty eloquent spokesmen of the race are represented in over a century of agitation and constructive effort. Apart from literary worth, the book is valuable in the insight it gives into the changing conditions of American life. Mr. Woodson emphasizes the political leaders rather than the clergy and educators. He gives a brief biography of the men he includes, and classifies the orations according to subject matter.

Benjamin Brawley has provided in "A New Survey of English Literature" (Knopf) a college textbook eminently suited to those youths of either sex who have already acquired or had thrust upon them some ability to appreciate the individual classic. He starts them where competent secondary instruction may be thought to have left off, and while not neglecting worthy prose and poetry for their own sakes, emphasizes those matters of mood, influence, tendency, time, place, and source which belong to scientific study. The work as a whole is one that students may well preserve in case as "grads" they wish to look into the subject of England's great writings from motives other than grim necessity.

With the "flamboyant insolence" of twenty five English summers, Beverley Nichols offers what he calls a young man's candid recollections of his elders and betters. "Twenty-Five" (Doran) is an autobiography, if the peregrinations of youth can be considered material for this particular form of literary expression. We think so, and yet hope that Mr. Nichols will write another at fifty and a third at seventy five; and if he should produce still another at a hundred, we should certainly read it. To Mr. Nichols the world is a well equipped laboratory in which no one need hesitate to make experiments, and in a brief quarter of a century he has made many. Some were made in England, others in America, some in Australia, and quite a number in Greece. Some were made in company

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with John Masefield, others with Michael Arlen, some with Winston Churchill, and by far the most interesting with the silver toned Melba.

"An Economic History of Russia" (Dutton) by James Mavor is, rather, a study in the social, political, and intellectual development of that country based on a thorough analysis of economic dynamics. Though Professor Mavor stresses the economic interpretation, he allows also for spiritual values as potent factors in history. The present revised volumes include the history of Russia up to the close of the first stage of the Revolution in 1907. Very scholarly, yet very readable, these books should be of inestimable value to students of Russian and general history, as well as to lay readers interested in the struggles and failures of a mighty race in its laborious march toward light and freedom.

Vachell Lindsay seems to have become so hypnotized by ideas that he stumbles over himself in trying to get them in front of his own poetry. In "Collected Poems" (Macmillan) this preoccupation has caused him to introduce the book with a long, repetitious apologia. It is apparent that he desires to make the world a better place to live in, but this patchwork of reminiscence and bombast ill prepares the reader for his poetry. After all, these great songs can speak for themselves as deathless, throbbing expressions of the American spirit. They will always stand alone as striking interpretations of a national idiom. It seems unfortunate, too, that Mr. Lindsay has included some mediocre versification with the splendors of the Santa Fe Trail and General Booth. But few poets can sift from their work the thing that is weak and ineffective. As for the drawings that are scattered through the book, they are often lovely and decorative. But in this respect, too, Mr. Lindsay cannot let the observer form his own opinion; he must needs step in front of them and explain at length their symbolical meanings.

England is going to the bowwows. This fact may be confirmed by a perusal of "The State of England" (Putnam) by the "Gentleman with a Duster". The ubiquitous Gentleman again wields his duster to good effect, uncovering beneath the accumulated dust of centuries of English grandeur, a diseased national character that is in imminent danger of extinction. His indictment of English economic and moral conditions is bitter. But supplementing a complete diagnosis of this dread disease is a suggested remedy: the bitter tasting medicine of moral uprightness, economic sanity, and spiritual fidelity. This is distinctly a cruel book, yet it is provocative of profound thought.

In "Academy Papers" (Scribner) are collected addresses on language problems delivered, under the Evangeline Wilbour Blashfield Foundation, before the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Here one finds an essay on "Style" by W. C. Brownell which has since been incorporated into his "The Genius of Style"; a paper in which Paul Elmer More pictures our language as having entered a period of corruption and decline, and a paper by Brander Matthews seeking to refute Professor More's conception. These papers, as well as the others, are academic in flavor, often technical, and in some cases a trifle pedantic; but their intentions are excellent, and their compulsions are considerable.

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There is something fascinating and infinitely pathetic about the old age of a great artist. Because of his lawless, volatile nature, "The Last Years of Rodin" (McBride) present a curious view of that strange creature, the artist, hedged about by as queer a host as ever clung to the tottering throne of some mediæval monarch. The author of this really remarkable volume, Marcelle Tirel, was for years Rodin's faithful secretary. She appears to be a sensible, matter of fact person who, though revering deeply the Master as an artist, was fully aware of his weak and erratic character as a man. With a sincerity which we have no reason to question she shows us the string of parasites — mostly feminine — who were able many times to prey upon both the time and the coffers of France's great man. Her portrait of that suspicious, warmhearted, primitive peasant who lived as Rodin's wife till she died at an advanced age, though legally married to him only a short time before her death, is a piece of touching description as graphic as a Flemish painting. This book cannot add much to the critical evaluation of Rodin's work, for the author is confessedly not a critic of art. But her views upon life, as it was lived at Meudon and Paris, are sharp and clear, and full of absorbing detail.

The desire to teach a lesson seems to us to spoil much of the poetry of Isabel Fiske Conant in "Puritan" (Vinal). It nullifies the beauty of a really competent handling of words by obtruding itself upon the lyrical pattern. There are too many poems here, in our opinion, that celebrate the nobility of our Puritan forefathers. When she forgets these sainted ancestors of hers, Mrs. Conant's verse is really delightful. Pictures like those in "Anesthesia", "Circus Elephant", and "Circus Riders" are delicately drawn and clear. Other pieces, however, seem marred by the author's weakness for involved phraseology.

In her book, "The Nobel Prize Winners in Literature" (Appleton), Annie Russell Marble attempts to explain the works of the authors who have reaped this reward. Her emphasis is upon their literary output; biographical and historical material is used only by way of illustration. Mrs. Marble tells the American reader which books by Nobel prize winners have been translated into English, and where to get them. Her book opens with an account of Alfred Nobel and his remarkable will, describing the manner in which awards are made. The idealistic side of the different authors is stressed, showing that substantially the intentions of Alfred Nobel have been carried out.

The ambition, it seems, to invest children with nice minds still induces adults to stew the "lambs" in a squash of sagely diluted fancies and puerile emotions. Mary Graham Bonner, although she declaims in the critical chapters of "A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading" (Funk, Wagnalls) against the unwise expurgation of literature for the young, and shows a laudable discrimination in numerous instances of her listed choice, yet adheres to certain obnoxious ones of the old juvenile bibliography. For our part, we had hoped to find Dottie Dimple and her ilk relegated to the consuming oblivion of ill judged perpetrations. Alas! We are in candor bound to protest also that never before have we known "Penquin Island" characterized as a tale of "nature and satire for the reader of sixteen and older"!

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A book of critical appreciation of Catholic poets from Chaucer to Joyce Kilmer must needs cover well trodden ground. Yet there is a certain freshness of viewpoint in Katherine Brégy's book about "Poets and Pilgrims" (Benziger). Devout Catholics should find her essays admirable, while readers who are not particularly interested in the effect of the Church on the spiritual journey of its adherents will find in this book a considerable amount of interesting information about some poets whose lives and works are too little known to us: namely, Louise Imogen Guiney, Katharine Tynan, Ernest Dowson, and Paul Claudel. If the author seems to overemphasize the influence of Catholicism on such poets as Chaucer, Lodge, and Shakespeare, she has, at least, the advantage of that vagueness of spiritual outline which time lends to these men. Moreover, it is true that the controversies that ranged about the Church in England at that time, and for succeeding ages, must have been reflected to a greater or less degree in the works of contemporary writers.

Happily Robert Haven Schauffler does not write into the first essay a formula for the mood of "Peter Pantheism" (Macmillan). But for the comfort of any who may rely on definitions to spare the imagination exertion, we venture on the author's testimony to describe the state of Peter Pantheism as a sportsmanlike willingness to derive pleasure from contact with external scenes that meet the eye, to draw good humor from the reflections that stroll through one's mind. From a rare savoring of coined words, hard on the trail of charm, to the tickled recollection of infant loves, to companionship with seamen and the morally sensitive guides of the Maine woods, Mr. Schauffler proceeds with a flow of humor and candid fancy and cordial observation. The volume should content the æsthetic, or the less fastidious, dabblers in moods.

The unadventurous have always found a vicarious thrill in seeing the criminal as hero, and Raymond Postgate has satisfied their taste in his "Murder, Piracy and Treason" (Houghton Mifflin), an account of English and American trials from Katrington's trial by combat in 1380 to the execution of Charles Peace in 1874. The author believes that we live in a very drab and mercenary epoch, and regrets the colorful life of the past. He depicts the happy time when people were put to death for such imaginary crimes as heresy and witchcraft by legal execution more brutal than a lynching. Mr. Postgate has a true narrative gift, avoids the gruesome, and conveys much of the atmosphere of the past.

The light and witty surface of Keith Preston's verse conceals a keen kernel of truth concerning the follies of this age. In his "Top o' the Column" (Covici) you will find rhymes long and short, paraphrasing Horace or Joyce Kilmer, and all blessed with the same delightfully satiric quality that once emanated from a Sabine farm. There are too few writers of light verse today who, without malice, smile a gently cynical smile of tolerance at the foibles of the genus homo. As we chuckle over these newspaper pieces of Keith Preston's, we relish the topical nature of them. In four lines a columnist may dispose of a front page feature that runs into many columns. This is fitting, for otherwise we might take the news seriously — and then where should we be?

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

The one new title in this month's score has an interesting history, in that it was released as a motion picture previous to its appearance in book form. In reality, however, the novel was completed about a year ago by Mr. Grey, who then personally supervised the making of the film. The name of Zane Grey is sufficient to insure a good sale for a book, but there is no doubt that added impetus was given by an introduction to the motion picture public. Fannie Hurst's "Mannequin" was recently released as a picture, even while the story continued to run its course as a prize winning magazine serial. Perhaps this procedure is but a step toward the "new literature" which the cinema enthusiasts have long been heralding, in which the scenario will be the first product of the author's art and the book a mere byproduct. Who knows? — F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	The Perennial Bachelor	*Anne Parrish*	HARPER
2.	Wild Geese	*Martha Ostenso*	DODD
3.	The Keeper of the Bees	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	One Increasing Purpose	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE
5.	Glorious Apollo	*E. Barrington*	DODD
6.	Thunder on the Left	*Christopher Morley*	DOUBLEDAY
7.	The Professor's House	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
8.	Soundings	*A. Hamilton Gibbs*	LITTLE
9.	Little Ships	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
10.	The Vanishing American*	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
11.	Portrait of a Man with Red Hair	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
12.	The Constant Nymph	*Margaret Kennedy*	DOUBLEDAY

GENERAL

1.	The Man Nobody Knows	*Bruce Barton*	BOBBS
2.	Twenty-five Years	*Viscount Grey of Fallodon*	STOKES
3.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	The Fruit of the Family Tree	*Albert Edward Wiggam*	BOBBS
5.	John Keats	*Amy Lowell*	HOUGHTON
6.	The Travel Diary of a Philosopher	*Count Keyserling*	HARCOURT
7.	Ariel: The Life of Shelley	*André Maurois*	APPLETON
8.	Anatole France Himself	*Jean-Jacques Brousson*	LIPPINCOTT
9.	The New Decalogue of Science	*Albert Edward Wiggam*	BOBBS
10.	Mark Twain's Autobiography	*Samuel L. Clemens*	HARPER
11.	Twice Thirty	*Edward W. Bok*	SCRIBNER
12.	The Life of William Osler	*Harvey Cushing*	OXFORD

* This title has not before appeared in the Monthly Score.

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THE SEVEN SEAS

A French Novel Attacks M. Poincaré — Montparnasse — French Books on the Motion Picture and on Child Life — The Grand Passion of Napoleon; and Napoleon through a German's Eyes — German Criticism of G. B. S. — Scandinavian Taste in Literature

IT is not often that a former president and prime minister of the French Republic is chastised in print by a noted novelist and member of the diplomatic corps. Yet that is what Jean Giraudoux has done in his new novel "Bella". His victim is easily identified as Raymond Poincaré. The cause of this unusual attack is clearly the attitude of M. Poincaré toward Philippe Berthelot, the uncrowned ruler of the French Foreign Office. The enforced retirement of Berthelot, following the failure of the Banque de Chine, of which his brother was one of the principal shareholders, and his return to power shortly after the fall of Poincaré's cabinet, have been matters of common knowledge in France. Giraudoux shows us the connection between the two incidents as part of a campaign carried on by the Poincaré family against the Berthelots for many years.

Henri Poincaré and Marcelin Berthelot were both noted scientists in the latter half of the last century. Giraudoux contrasts the character and aspirations of the two clans and unhesitatingly decides in favor of the Berthelots. While the novelist is careful not to mention any names, and makes his allusions part of a wholly imaginary love story which brings into play all his customary lightness of touch and whimsical grace, yet there can be little doubt to whom he is referring in the pages of "Bella". It is not surprising therefore that his volume has produced the effect of a bombshell in Parisian literary and diplomatic circles, although professional reviewers are taking pains to avoid any mention of the fact in their studiously academic notices of the novel. Nothing could better illustrate the change in the French attitude toward M. Poincaré than the publication of "Bella".

* * * *

All those Americans, and they are legion, who have ever sat on the wide yet crowded *terrasse* of the Dome or the Rotonde, those two cafés that face each other just where the Boulevard Raspail and the Boulevard Montparnasse intersect, should be interested in a recently published volume describing the strange region of which these cafés form the centre. "Montparnasse", by Gustave Fuss-Amoré and Maurice des Ombiaux, presents a substantially accurate and always entertaining account of the habits and customs of the international fauna to be found between the Bal Bullier, of which Allen Seeger wrote, the Closerie des Lilas, still haunted by the shade of youthful George Moore, of Huysmans, of Guillaume Apollinaire, and the garish, glittering Rue de la Gaieté, that West 125th Street of Paris. Of course the authors insist on dropping a few tears on the dear dead past, the heroic days of fifteen or twenty years ago, when no tourist ever ventured south of the Luxembourg Gardens and Trotsky might be seen planning his moves on

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the chess board at the Rotonde with all the astuteness that marked his assault on the forces of Czarism. Fortunately, however, they devote more space to the amazing cosmopolitanism of Montparnasse as it is today. Poets and drug sellers, models and anarchists, painters and pamphleteers, the famous, the near famous, the would be famous of all countries and sexes, crowd their pages. Here is material for a dozen novels. Fuss-Amoré and des Ombiaux have set it all down in graphic fashion. Incidentally, what they say of the American invasion of Montparnasse, with its advantages and drawbacks, makes interesting reading and one wishes they had gone into this branch of their subject a little more thoroughly.

* * * *

Is the all pervasive motion picture a new form of art? Are Griffith and Ince creators of beauty comparable with Dostoyevsky and other great novelists? Is Chaplin an actor whose art one can discuss seriously as one does that of Chaliapin or Sarah Bernhardt? A considerable portion of the French intelligentsia, particularly among the younger generation, would unhesitatingly answer yes to these questions. Representative reasons are given in a collection of articles issued under the title of "Cinema" by that very enterprising publication "Les Cahiers du Mois" of which André and François Berge are the editors. Among the writers who here examine the influence of the screen in contemporary intellectual life, we find Jean Cocteau, Joseph Delteil, Philippe Soupault, and Blaise Cendrars. Fernand Léger, the ultramodern painter, who has himself designed sets for several important French films, discusses "Le Cinema et les Arts Plastiques"; we have notes on motion pictures in relation to modern architecture by Robert Mallet Stevens, the humor of the movies by the illustrator and caricaturist Gus Bofa; "Musique et Cinema", "Le Critique des Films", "Cinema et Surréalisme", etc., etc. At the same time such authorities as Marcel L'Herbier, Jean Epstein, Jean Tedesco, and Germaine Dulac, to whom we owe some of the most important and artistic films produced in France since the war, express their ideas on the æsthetic laws governing the art of the screen. There is also an eloquent tribute to the memory of Louis Delluc, who, more than any other one man, was responsible for introducing beauty and originality into the making of French motion pictures and educating the public to appreciate these elements, both in native films and those that came from abroad.

Simultaneously with "Cinema" appears a volume by Léon Moussinac entitled "Naissance du Cinema". Here is an ambitious and, on the whole, successful attempt to summarize in a single volume the principal milestones that have marked the path of cinema production, to explain the mechanical means by which certain optical effects are obtained, to compare the film productions of different countries, and to trace the lines along which the motion picture is destined to develop. Like other French students of the screen art Moussinac admits the supremacy of American films of certain types. On the other hand, he declares that the average American production lacks the lyrical quality which one is beginning to associate with, for example, Swedish pictures.

* * * *

We have the assurance, based on no less an authority than that of "Mother Goose", that the ingredients of which future husbands and fathers are made

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are limited to "snippets and snails and puppy-dogs' tails". This would no doubt account for the behavior of the male characters in many modern novels, but certain books dealing with child life lately published in Paris reveal the old rhyme as a libel, probably invented by some forerunner of what is known in the gay city as *le féminisme intégral*. For instance, the little boys who appear in Henri Poullaile's remarkable volume of short stories, "Ames Neuves", are so intensely human that one feels they must have been the actual flesh and blood companions of the author's early years. At any rate he has produced a volume marked by a compassionate tenderness toward the little ones who suffer from the injustice of a social system they have had no hand in fashioning. M. Poullaile's remarkable insight into the workings of the child mind reminds one of that charming first chapter in Christopher Morley's "Thunder on the Left".

More consciously "literary" is the series of brief essays under the title of "L'Enfant" by that noted woman novelist, Gerard d'Houville. Madame d'Houville does not restrict herself entirely to boys but one suspects she writes about them with a certain partiality. At all events her own delicate, exquisite prose and the charming incidents and children's sayings which she weaves into her text make this too slender volume one that will be treasured by all lovers of little folk.

More in keeping with the old nursery rhyme are some of the remarks and anecdotes quoted by Léon Treich in his "Histoires Enfantines". Pierrot, Jacques, Paulot, Gerard, and Michel recall inevitably those small but already serious young gentlemen of five or six one encounters going about their affairs in the paths of the Bois de Boulogne or the Parc Monceau. Already they reign despotically over the "female of the species", be she nurse, grandmother, or little sister. Treich has collected a genuine anthology of their comments on life as they see it, and if the future years will modify their views one can but regret that we grown ups in our conversation do not display an equal imagination.

Incidentally, the American reader of French books cannot fail to notice that the number of volumes containing studies of the early years of boys is considerably larger than that of books dealing with girls. French literature has no equivalent to Alcott's "Little Women" or Kate Douglas Wiggin's "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm". On the other hand we have the two first volumes of Rolland's "Jean Christophe", the remarkable opening chapters of Martin du Gard's "Les Thibaults", and, presenting numerous analogies with the latter, the greater part of André Gide's new novel "Les Faux-Monnayeurs", which has just been published in book form. Of course there is Willy's Claudine, but it would be a libel on French womanhood to identify too closely the character and instincts of that all too precocious young person with the generality of her compatriots.

* * * *

Octave Aubry's romance of Louis XVII, "Le Roi Perdu", was deservedly popular. The theme of his new novel is the ever attractive personality of Napoleon. The amours of Napoleon have often served as material for novelists who delight in turning history into romance. In "Marie Walewska", M. Aubry has taken the most celebrated of the Emperor's many love affairs.

Napoleon himself is a bewildering character for a novelist. His attitude toward women seems to have been

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crudely oriental. But, according to M. Aubry's story, in the young Polish countess Marie Walewska he encountered someone who did not respond to his impulsive, domineering methods in the usual way. Marie Walewska resented his advances and surrendered only when she was assured that her country might thus be restored to its former greatness.

The story of Marie Walewska and Napoleon is, in M. Aubry's skilful hands, a deeply moving episode. It is not difficult to believe that Napoleon was genuinely in love with the charming Polish countess, whose devotion to the Emperor increased with the passing of the years. Their passion was shrewdly observed by Fouché, whose manipulation of Napoleon's matrimonial affairs was the triumph of a master of intrigue. The history of the divorce from Josephine is of course a feature of the story. In the end, M. Aubry leaves Napoleon in Elba with Countess Walewska and their son as fleeting visitors.

M. Aubry does not adhere strictly to history in presenting Marie Walewska as the *grande amoureuse*, for only a year after Waterloo she married a colonel of dragoons. But M. Aubry's vivid picture of the Imperial Court in Paris, with its background of historic figures and Fouché as the evil genius of the two lovers, makes an admirable setting for this story of Napoleon's passion. The book is published by Fayard in Paris.

Napoleonic literature is being steadily added to year by year. An unexpectedly eulogistic contribution is "Napoleon und die Deutschen" (Berlin: Georg Bondi). The author of this book, Herr von Berthold Vallentin, published in 1922 a long study of Napoleon, in which he revealed himself as an enthusiastic admirer. The present volume is smaller and in a sense supplementary to his earlier work. While Herr Vallentin does not follow the extremist example of some of his professorial contemporaries who claim Shakespeare as Germany's own, he emphasizes Napoleon's ambitions for a Commonwealth of Europe as opposed to any narrow nationalist policy. In support of this theory, Herr Vallentin attaches importance to Napoleon's Corsican birth. It seems probable, however, that the student of history will continue to regard Napoleon as more of a patriotic individualist than an imperialist. Herr Vallentin follows in the path of Heine and Goethe in admiring the character and ideals of Napoleon, but his enthusiasm for his subject may have warped his judgment of Napoleon's policy. "My destiny" was surely more personal than either nationalist or pan-European.

* * * *

Don Luigi Sturzo, the founder of the Italian People's Party formed in opposition to Mussolini, is the author of a book which Faber and Gwyer are publishing in England this year under the title of "Italy and Fascismo". He gives a critical account of the Fascist movement in its relation to Italian history and forecasts some interesting developments.

* * * *

An entertaining little book has been published in Prague by Karel Capek, whose play "The Makropoulos Secret" is running in New York. It is entitled "Producing a Play; Together with a Guide Behind the Scenes". Dr. Capek was for some time a producer at the repertory theatre in Prague, the Vinohrady Divadlo, and "Producing a Play" is obviously the harvest of his experience. His views on the world of

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tinsel and limelight have the same curious charm of style and expression that revealed itself in his "Letters from England". The amusing illustrations are the work of his brother, Josef Capek. I hear the book is already being translated into English.

* * * *

An expert and impartial account of naval operations in the Great War, by Admiral Sparre, has been published in Oslo by Aschehoug. The book is intended for the general reader. Both Allied and German sources are quoted from with commendable impartiality. A chapter is devoted to the United States navy and its work during the war.

* * * *

Bernard Shaw has been one of Germany's most popular dramatists for many years. "Pygmalion", it will be remembered, was produced in Berlin before London saw the play. German critics have been unanimous in his praise since prewar days. Now, however, dissentient voices are beginning to arise. The well known German playwright, Herbert Eulenberg, has issued a little book entitled "Gegen Shaw: Eine Streitschrift" (Against Shaw: A Controversial Pamphlet). It is a bitter attack on Shaw's dramatic reputation. Herr Eulenberg considers G. B. S. as a satirist vastly inferior to Swift, condemns much of his characterization as mere journalism, and declares that Ibsen's characters will outlive all the creations of Shaw. Herr Eulenberg also resents what he considers Shaw's frivolous treatment of celebrated historical characters. Whether the Shaw of Herr Eulenberg's criticism is the real Shaw is very much open to question. Herr Eulenberg seems more anxious to initiate controversy than to appreciate the dramatist's true purpose.

* * * *

Douglas Goldring, who has been lecturing on the work of James Elroy Flecker at Copenhagen and has now returned to Gothenburg in Sweden (where he has the post of English Lektor at the Commercial High School), writes to me as follows about the literary taste of the Scandinavian countries: "Of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, I should say, to judge by the kind of English and American books which are read and appreciated, that the standard of literary taste is highest in Sweden. The Swedes are a serious and intellectual people and like a book to have something in it. John Galsworthy is extremely popular, and I have also come across quite a number of people familiar with the novels of Thomas Hardy. Although there is a good deal of rubbish in the Swedish bookshops, the better kind of English fiction is usually to be found in them as well. The Danes and the Norwegians, on the other hand, seem to be mostly content with our 'best sellers'; and English detective stories and 'best sellers' by such writers as Ethel M. Dell and Elinor Glyn find a ready market in cheap editions in Denmark and in Norway."

MICHAEL JOSEPH

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

THE Authors' League Dinner started in to be a large and pompous affair at the Hotel Roosevelt, and ended magnificently with the entrance of Captain Fried of the "Roosevelt". Between times the authors played children's games. Balloons were tossed about by the fair hands of various lady writers. A list of names would give no idea of the talent and beauty assembled. In fact no one but a certain society editor in Cincinnati could do justice to such an assemblage of talent fittingly garbed for evening. The sight of Ellis Parker Butler indulging in a mock prizefight while Dorothy Gish, red trousered and vigorous, hopped about the ring as referee, recalled the good old days of playtime and made it apparent that authors have, after all, the souls of innocents and are easily amused. There was much embarrassed laughter in the course of the evening. Tony Sarg proved a stern and determined announcer. Anita Loos watched without cringing a film of herself and Adolphe Menjou rehearsing an embrace. The chief thing discovered by me during the evening was that Will and Wallace Irwin's wives are as charming as ever and that Ben Bernie's orchestra is a fine one to dance to if you can find the right partner. The one thing missing from the program so far as I was concerned was a pingpong match between Alexander Woollcott and, say, Jack Dempsey. I wonder why Mr. Sarg, brilliant impresario that he is, didn't think of that. Charles Wharton Stork, come all the way from Philadelphia for the occasion, was seen wandering about wondering what it was that amused everyone so much. Carl Hovey, recently returned from Hollywood, affirmed that parties in Los Angeles weren't like that. A lovely young lady dressed in white puff balls or something danced prettily. Captain Fried seemed puzzled but cordial, and Miss Gish floated aimlessly through various dances with various partners. It all reminded me of a Sunday School picnic in Vermont — in spirit, I mean, of course. Ah, those good old picnics, when boats were chartered, sandwiches put up in boxes, and games played near Fort Ticonderoga, while our grandmothers told us tales of Ethan Allen and the young things danced to the strains of a German (quite all right in those days) band in the pavilion.

Even with snow blocking traffic spring seems to be in the air, if one can judge by the entertaining quality of the newspapers, in which one finds Lady Cathcarts and Poultney Bigelows, parties given by Earl Carroll, and a deal of other sparkling and scandalous material. This makes breakfast endurable. A most interesting discussion was overheard the other day between Dr. Morris Fishbein, he of "The Medical Follies", etc., and the pleasant Thomas Masson. Mr. Masson has opinions on diet, so has Dr. Fishbein. Mr. Masson is slight, active, overflowing with sentiment. Dr. Fishbein is comfortably fleshed, urbane, cynical. They soon shifted from the physical to the metaphysical and, before ever anyone could stop them, weight seemed to have changed to Einstein's theory of relativity and, thence, to religion — or

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was it perhaps sex? One or the other. I am such a poor reporter of these abstruse discussions. To be sure, all discussions are not so genial as was this one. Several dinner tables recently have very nearly been overturned upon me as a result of discussions of the politics of the Wilson administration. These result, of course, from the publication in the New York "Herald-Tribune" of the House letters. Usually I keep as still as a mouse, but whenever Ambassador Page's name comes into the discussion I remember the loyal, gentle, genial editor, publisher, and man of letters, and feel called upon to take a firm stand in favor of the Ambassador.

Florida, with all its activities, is turning to poetry. The Ponce de Leon Prize results:

The Florida Poetry Society offers, under the auspices of the Allied Arts of Winter Park, Florida, the Ponce de Leon Prize of $100 for the best unpublished poem upon any subject submitted to the Society by April first, 1926. The competition is open to all natives or residents of Florida, including Winter Residents. Manuscripts should be submitted anonymously, accompanied by a sealed envelope bearing the name of the author, and should be addressed to the President of the Poetry Society, Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Winter Park, Florida.

William C. Bobbs, president of the Bobbs-Merrill Company of Indianapolis, died on February eleventh at the age of sixty five. He was a native of Ohio, but lived most of his life in Indianapolis, where he started his career as a bookseller with the firm which afterward became his own. He was well known in the country as a sound business man and a person of literary appreciations. Charles M. Doughty, author of the great travel book, one of the greatest ever written, "Travels in Arabia Deserta", died on January twenty first at his home in Kent, England. Mr. Doughty's explorations and wanderings in Arabia were marked by heroism, romance, and scholarship. A facsimile reissue

Charles M. Doughty

of this book, made in America in 1924, has met with unusual demand. It was introduced by Colonel Lawrence, whose great campaign during the war practically won Arabia for England. If you have never dipped into "Arabia Deserta" you have missed a joy that you should soon grant yourself. It is a book to keep near one and to turn to when the rigors of everyday life become too great and you seek an escape into romantic scenes described in glowing prose.

There was a wide diversity of talent at the evening spent among "Creative Youth" under the auspices of the Seltzer Library Club. Youth, it was

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cheering to observe, is a very elastic period, beginning with adolescence and ending with — well, I'm not good at guessing ages, but John Howard Lawson, for instance, who spoke on "The Creative Theatre", has been in long trousers for some years I should say. The fifteen year old violinist, Alexander Harsanyi, made some very remarkable attempts, of which I thought the Hungarian poems by Hubay very interesting. "Young America Articulate", in the person of Melvin P. Levy, author of "Matrix", assured us that there are artists in America. Oh, yes there are, if only one looks under every bush; and what is more, they flourish in this country which, in spite of its materialism — dare I suggest because of its materialism? — is becoming visibly broader every day. Little Nathalia Crane, very fairylike in turquoise blue, reciting "The Janitor's Boy" in a voice which, though all on one note, had amazing volume, was really delightful. Some of her poems have been set to charming melodies by Frances E. Friedman.

His publishers send me an amusing note concerning Dr. W. W. Keen, author of many medical and surgical books as well as "I Believe in God and in Evolution", and "Everlasting Life". Dr. Keen recently celebrated his eighty ninth birthday and is still remarkably active for a man of his age. He told the following incident at a dinner given to Judge John Marshall Gest by the Board of Governors of the University Club of Philadelphia. It appears that Dr. Keen lately received a letter from Vancouver — he is careful to explain that it was from a Scotchman. It was addressed to: "The Son of the Late Dr. W. W. Keen, Philadelphia." Dr. Keen replied to the letter, giving the desired information, and ending thus: "My son happens to be four daughters but I remain, very truly yours, the Late Dr. W. W. Keen."

At a dinner given by John O'Hara Cosgrave for the Indian philosopher and wise man, Inayat Khan, it was interesting to note that a discussion raged until midnight on various forms and facets of religion. Heywood Broun and Bruce Bliven waxed eloquent. Ernest Boyd, with penetrating cynicism, destroyed sentiment whenever it poked its head above the table, often from the direction of Waldo Frank. It was the night after the opening of Mr. Boyd's successful adaptation from the French of "A Weak Woman", so his gaiety was in no way quenched. The Indian philosopher seemed serene and not a whit puzzled by the ebb and flow of conversation. William Morrow, the publisher, remembered days at Harvard under Santayana and William James, while I discussed Zane Grey with his publisher, Mr. Briggs, and heard not a word of complaint from Mr. Broun. This was one of the most successful dinners I have ever attended. The food was good, and the conversation excellent, and everyone actually listened to everyone else. As we said good night to the distinguished guest, he remarked, "God bless you!" and it was the first time in years I had heard that remark sound as though it were really meant.

Fairfax Downey, formerly of "The Yale Record", now of the New York "Herald-Tribune", author of "Father's First Two Years", and father, too, has done the inevitable and it is soon to be published. It is a parody of Milne's immortal verses. Downey calls his book "When We Were Rather Older",

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It is slightly, oh ever so slightly, sophisticated. It leads me to wonder just how soon poor Christopher Robin will be able to understand it all. Perhaps never, probably never, if he does not visit these prohibition ridden shores. Or go to an American college, like Yale or Swarthmore. Mr. Downey lives somewhere in the suburbs and moves at ease along golf courses and in country clubs; which tendency shows in his verses. As you can see from the following poem, Mr. Downey has turned himself into a sort of Fitzgerald in verse form:

THE TOY SOLDIER

I want a soldier
(A soldier in a uniform),
I want a soldier to come and play around.
I'd give him cocktails
(Big ones, peppy ones),
And caviar sandwiches heaped in a mound.

I want a soldier
(A tall one, no dead one),
I want a soldier to beau me about.
I don't want to marry one
(They don't get pay enough),
I'd not consider wedding one. No, that's out.

The United States Veterans' Bureau asks us to remind ex-service men of the right to reinstate and convert their wartime insurance, provided this right is exercised on or before July 2, 1926. It may be done by communicating with the regional office, applying for physical examination, and proceeding with the course as mapped out in the information supplied by the Bureau. Speaking of national matters, it is remarkable what the Committee on Constitutional Instruction of the National Security League, under the chairmanship of Lloyd Taylor, has done to promote the study of our Constitution. In 1920 but one state had a law making the teaching of the Constitution compulsory in the schools. After five years' work thirty seven states now have such a law. The Committee and one or two of its members are responsible for the passage of the law in thirty six states. They have 150 speakers on call, an organization formed by Mr. Taylor's committee, who speak on the Constitution in nearly all the states. During the past five years they have sent out about 200 copies of the Constitution a day, practically all on request. "Constitution Day" is September 17 and Mr. Taylor believes that its celebration ought to be improved upon.

Amy Lowell was one of my greatest admirations and dearest friends. She was a great woman and a loyal comrade. Her poetry I admire, and her biography of Keats seems to me a fine book. J. C. Squire is a distinguished English critic. "The London Mercury" carried a tolerant review of the Keats book. His review in the "Observer" was no sharper than many a review I have myself written. Yet, so deeply do I feel for Miss Lowell, and so angry did this review make me, that I was led to say things about a good English friend which were uncalculated and, as I review them now, as annoying to me as they must have been to him. To be sure, I am not at all backing down on my feeling that some of the English papers were unfair to Miss Lowell's book; but that is their affair, and their critical opinion can scarcely be mixed with personalities. J. C. Squire has done much for American literature in England in one way and another, and he deserves better treatment than I recently gave him. I somehow wish it were possible not to let critical opinions get in the way of friendship. William Rose Benét recently said that it would be impossible for two book reviewers — one of them myself — to sit down at the same

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dinner table. His point seemed to be that we were both too sincere in our critical judgments to be able to enjoy each other's company, or something of the sort. Now we do, as a matter of fact, and have recently broken bread together. To be sure, we did not talk of the particular argumentation which seems to have become public about us — but we talked of many other things and often agreed. Perhaps no two men who disagreed on a fundamental principle of life could enjoy each other's society. Yet I have never yet found a man with whom it was impossible to find some fundamental point of agreement.

As an advocate of the duel, it was with a good deal of surprise that I heard one being planned for quite coldly not long ago. Should the authorities ask me who the parties are I should be unable to tell. The names meant nothing to me, even though one of the men was an American writer and the other a famous Frenchman. This duel, it seems, is to be fought in the traditional manner in good old France. It is all over a question of American honor, or something like that. Ah, well — one may put it down to the score of good publicity if one chooses to be so mean. Bob McClure, author of the successful first novel "The Dominant Blood", was in New York City recently on his way from California to Italy. He has finished a new book, but has kept the manuscript by him for some polishing. He tells me that he works with great slowness, and that he thinks his rate of output will probably be one novel every two years. We collected, to say hello to him, some of the other Yale novelists of approaching middle age. Novelists and playwrights, to be sure. Bob was one of those people who, in college, had exceedingly tentative literary ambitions only. Thought about writing. Then, after the war, circumstances brought about a time in which he could sit down and write a novel. I remember hearing that he had finished one and was bringing it on to New York. The next thing I knew, it was being published with a critical outburst from no less a person than Booth Tarkington. Mrs. McClure tells me that Tarkington, working on a new novel, says it is quite different from anything he has done before. Well, there are spots in "Women" that for sheer joy outdo most other gay volumes of the season, and I don't know that anyone wants him to change from his old style very much. However, he always turns the trick, and we shall see what we shall see!

Robert E. McClure

Mr. McNitt of "McNaught's Magazine" has been gathering his contributors and others at the luncheon table of late for the discussion of weighty problems. Recently hypocrisy was discussed with heat. Rube Goldberg

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was much interested and informed us that his children still believe in Santa Claus, which is encouraging under the circumstances. Don Seitz, genial and expansive, confessed that he was enjoying his new duties on "The Outlook". I sat next Dr. Stuart Pratt Sherman, who seemed undisturbed by the discussions floating above and around and told several excellent anecdotes. I came away with the feeling that maybe I was a hypocrite, but at any rate a happy hypocrite. Whenever I am led into a discussion of hypocrisy I am reminded of that good old play, "Nothing but the Truth", and am comforted. After all, what's one man's truth is another man's hypocrisy, and although I am not a daily reader of Dr. Frank Crane I expect he seems as true to some men as H. L. Mencken does to others. The curious part of it is that there are probably those to whom all of both would seem true if they read the entire works of two of our most distinguished modern philosophers. This habit of Mr. McNitt's should be encouraged. I mean, the habit of gathering his contributors for discussion; only I respectfully suggest that speeches be ruled out. If this is an attempt to rival the Round Table at the Algonquin, which I was there told no longer exists, it will fail if speeches are the rule. I can't imagine what famous Head Waiter George of the artistic hostelry would do if someone like, say, Murdock Pemberton should arise at the Round Table to give a speech. It would never do. However, all this game of one group's gossiping about and making fun of another, is fine for the press and probably, in the long run, stimulating to life and literature. A long and heated discussion with Dr. Sherman was indulged in by me on the relative merits of "Pig Iron" and "An American Tragedy". Come to think of it, the discussion was neither long nor heated. If you are interested, as you should be, in what the sage of Illinois, transplanted to Manhattan, thinks of both books, you can find his opinions in that excellent publication, "Books".

In a high school paper published in Brooklyn I find the undergraduate reporter on books announcing that THE BOOKMAN is becoming more "sophomoric" and more "moral" with each issue. Obviously, in the mind of modern youth, the two go together. However, after a thirtieth birthday one has a right to be moral, and one is delighted to be called "sophomoric". The nicest birthday present received this year to mark the milestone, next to a complete set of Ibsen, was a small volume, "Pensées d'Epicure", with the inscription, "From your secretary who believes that the philosophy of Epicurus can prove most useful after thirty." For those who really would enjoy themselves, after thirty or before, even in Brooklyn high school days, I recommend "Carmencita and the Soldier", which can be seen many times and still enjoyed. There, the other evening, praising the production lavishly, were Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Hamilton, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Howard, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Norris. The dual performances of the Norrises, by the way, were published, as you will long since have observed, on the same day. This might almost have been said of the Howards when Clare Eames, who is Mrs. Howard, appeared in her husband's play "Lucky Sam McCarver". The preface to the published edition of that work has been causing much heated talk. It has even been noted over the radio. I quote a part from it here, the part which seems to

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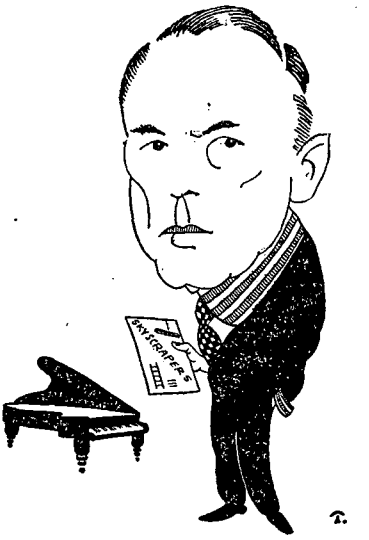
have caused most of the trouble, although it is all highly readable:

There is scarcely a critic, however, in all this theatrical capital of the Western world, who is willing to consider a play as an exhibition of acting. This may possibly arise from the fact that New York does not possess more than two or three critics who know an actor from a bull's foot. I wonder if there are so many as two or three who can tell the difference between a rôle and a performance. They will repeat in unison the time-honored dramatic axiom to the effect that "no play is a play until it is acted." But they will subsequently review every play they see by telling its story at great length and cheerfully omitting any serious consideration of the manner of its acting.

Into the gold and scarlet of the Metropolitan Opera House not so many days after Marion Talley made her début with all the tin cans of publicity tied to its tail, came a new note, a note of modern setting and negroid steps; and Covarrubias, the enfant terrible of caricature and design, sighed and said, "At last the Metropolitan is having her face lifted." Chicago turned out, with no show of bands, to see the first performance of "Skyscrapers", a ballet the score of which was written by a native son, John Alden Carpenter. It is a glowing and a beautiful contribution to the art of America. Robert Edmond Jones's scenery and lighting is as memorable as the music. The last five minutes of this amazing dance carnival are as lovely as any stage picture I have ever seen. Afterward through the corridors walked wits and fashionable ladies, trying to decide which way the winds of popular approval were blowing—and then bucking these winds. Here Sir John Lavery, precise and appreciative, paid graceful compliment to Ernest Peixotto. Here, Lady Colefax smiled her most vivid smile on a New York season which has found her constantly delightful. Here J. Hartley Manners chatted with Muriel Draper, resplendent in golden cloth and scarlet. It was, indeed, an historic occasion, when Sammy Lee, master of jazz dancing, bowed between the famous yellow draperies to applause that had no sound of the usual claque, and Horace Liveright, in a box, granted his approval.



John Alden Carpenter

The question of "theatre talkers" has been agitating me of late. It is most unpleasant when someone nearby in the theatre says things that interfere with one's peace of mind. On the other hand, it is equally annoying to be stared at and cursed at by serious lovers of the drama when one is forced to some ejaculation. Attending the magnificent performance of Ansky's "The Dybbuk" with a party recently, I indulged in hearty laughter at one or two lines in the play which I thought were funny. Not so the lady in front of me, whose hair was most mannishly and modishly bobbed. She not only glared but uttered the one

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word "Rabble!" in loud tones, which made the English novelist, her agent, and the American playwright with me feel small indeed! We must take our art seriously in Grand Street, it seems. Not far in front sat Zoe Akins, appropriately swathed in furs. She was too far ahead, however, for me to determine whether or not she laughed with the "rabble". At Marc Connelly's "The Wisdom Tooth", a play which seems to me beautiful and flawless in writing and performance, Henry Sell and his wife sat next me. Henry had just returned from Florida, which he described as a cheerless place and one to be avoided. He claims that now he is editor of "Harper's Bazar" he no longer reads books. This I doubt. The conversation in "The Wisdom Tooth" catches so perfectly the flow of "The American Language" that as the curtain went down the play seemed to go on about one. The blow came, however, when the stout merchant — or at least he looked it — back of me remarked, as Connelly's hero after an heroic gesture loses his job, "Well, that's certainly just what should have happened to him!"

To keep its contact with the world more direct, the New York Public Library published its first issue of a Staff Bulletin in January. This is a well printed, crisp little sheet, which reflects that curious combination of highbrow and lowbrow that is characteristic of most librarians and that makes them such tolerant, intelligent, and generally fascinating people. Of course, if I thought anything else about librarians, I couldn't very well say it with one in the family. But as a matter of fact I don't, and I am always completely humbled by their practical knowledge of books as well as their appreciation of them.

Ralph Barton, the illustrator, seen briefly at tea the other day, appears to have succumbed to the habit of wearing his tie drawn through a jeweled ring. This affectation in American literary and artistic circles was before, I think, confined to Sherwood Anderson. Stark Young, who gave Mr. Anderson the ring, informs me that it is set with rubies and diamonds, not, as I had once written, with garnets. Perhaps this fact is not so important as that a manuscript of Mr. Anderson's of which there was no copy was recently destroyed in a fire at his publisher's office. Involuntary censorship, so to say. Someone, in my opinion, should censor this ring and tie habit. At the same tea was Fannie Hurst, sitting close by her publisher, Blanche Knopf, just returned from a trip among midwest bookstores. Edna Ferber, after finishing her new novel, has gone to the Bahamas, and Dorothy Parker, to Europe. The town has therefore lost much of its gaiety and charm. A party which must have been high in wit and discretion was that given by Simon and Schuster on the completion of the fifth—or is it the sixth?—"Cross Word Puzzle Book" in the series edited by Messrs. Buranelli and Hartswick, and Margaret Petherbridge. The popularity of these volumes still continues, and a large quantity of them sell each week of the year. Mr. Doran, the well known publisher of this magazine, returning from London, tells me that the greatest minds of the English nation are absorbed in the sport. Miss Petherbridge informs me that she is soon going to begin writing fiction. "I must do something with this newly acquired vocabulary of mine", she explained. "I can't use it in ordinary conversation, and so I'm going to imitate James Joyce and put it all into one novel."

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